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Eagle Mascot Installed as Newest Winthrop Public Art

Winthrop University

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Eagle Mascot Installed as Newest Winthrop Public Art

Quick Facts

- On Friday, Winthrop workers will install a 12-foot eagle sculpture near the main entrance of campus.
- Artist Jon Hair of Cornelius, N.C., created the bronze sculpture over an 18-month period.

ROCK HILL, S.C. - Winthrop University workers will add the finishing touches Friday to a new campus landmark.

A **12-foot tall eagle sculpture** will be installed near the main entrance of the campus on Oakland Avenue. The sculpture is a gift from Charlotte N.C., businessman and philanthropist **Irwin Belk**, who contributed funds for the design and construction of the eagle. **Belk** also donated money for the university's outdoor track which was named in his honor.

Cornelius, N.C., artist **Jon Hair** was commissioned by Belk to create the original piece of art. While the sculptor is known for his realistic designs, **Hair** created a more stylistic eagle for Winthrop based on the university logo. He will be present to help with the installation of the 3,000-pound symbolic mascot.

Hair worked on the **Winthrop eagle** for the past 18 months. The massive eagle, with its 12-foot wingspan, was cast in bronze at a foundry in Hawthorne, Calif., and then shipped to Santa Fe, N.M., for a process that resulted in a metallic gold finish. The eagle sculpture will sit on a nearly 20-foot-tall concrete and brick pedestal designed by Hair and built by Leitner Construction Company of Rock Hill.

Known for his monumental works, **Hair** has sculpted pieces for galleries, private collections, corporate offices and more than a dozen college campuses. In 2003, **Hair** was designated "Official Sculptor of the U.S. Olympic Team" and "Official Sculptor of the U.S. Olympic Committee." The Winthrop monument is the third **Hair** sculpture for a South Carolina higher education institution.

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