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Winthrop University

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Education Professor and Three Students Release Abraham Lincoln Activity and Coloring Book

ROCK HILL, S.C. – With Abraham Lincoln’s 200th birthday approaching in a couple of months, a Winthrop University professor and three graduate students have designed a coloring and activity book for elementary students.

The book, “The Life and Times of Abe Lincoln,” celebrates Lincoln’s birthday on Feb. 12. Lincoln, who helped guide the country through great turmoil during the Civil War, is considered by scholars to be one of the country’s greatest presidents.

Education Professor Mark Dewalt and graduate students Merrissa Ritch, Jennifer Brown and Jessica Conley spent a year designing the 56-page coloring and activity book for first- through fourth-grade students.

Ritch, a December graduate seeking her master of arts in teaching degree, drew historically accurate pictures from Lincoln’s time for students to color. “It was very challenging because the pictures had to be simplified,” Ritch said. “I learned a lot about Lincoln and people of that time period.”

Brown, a December graduate who is a kindergarten teacher in Johnson City, Tenn., and Conley ’08, a school counselor at Graham Middle School in Charlotte, N.C., also helped with the project.

The authors and artist of “The Life and Times of Abe Lincoln,” will hold a book signing at The Bookworm from 4 to 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 18.

The book contains crossword puzzles, connect the dots, an encrypted message and other activities. An answer key is in the back for students to check their work. It is designed to be used a supplement to social studies, reading, mathematics and science curriculums. “We wanted to create something that the students could have as their own,” said Dewalt.

Initial costs for development and printing 2,000 books came from the Bank of America endowment and an anonymous donor from New Hampshire. Dewalt, the current Bank of America endowed professor for the Richard W. Riley College of Education, has taken orders for the $2 coloring book from schools in Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. He plans to use book payments to print additional copies.
Another book is underway featuring Thomas Jefferson. The development team will include Ritch as the artist and two new graduate students, Jennifer Fowler of Eastanollee, Ga., and Ginny Ramirez-Del Toro of Durham, N.C. Future book ideas include the first African-American baseball player, Jackie Robinson, and the American Red Cross founder, Clara Barton.

For more information about the Lincoln book or to order the books in bulk, contact Dewalt at 803/323-2151.