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Winthrop University

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# George W. Bush Institute Expands Principal Leadership Program

## Quick Facts

- The invitation to join the Alliance to Reform Education Leadership is an honor and reflects the positive impact Winthrop is having on school leadership in South Carolina and the Charlotte region, said Dr. Jennie Rakestraw, dean of the Richard W. Riley College of Education.
- AREL is focused on creating a collaborative network of preparation programs that are focused on AREL's nine competency standards.



Jennie Rakestraw

ROCK HILL, S.C. — The George W. Bush Institute has named Winthrop University as one of nine new principal preparation sites of the Alliance to Reform Education Leadership (AREL), a network of innovative principal preparation programs around the country that are changing the way school leaders are recruited, selected, trained, evaluated and empowered.

The invitation to join the **Alliance to Reform Education Leadership** is an honor and reflects the positive impact Winthrop is having on school leadership in South Carolina and the Charlotte region, said **Dr. Jennie Rakestraw**, dean of the **Richard W. Riley College of Education**. “Winthrop provides an innovative approach to preparing school principals and assistant principals led by educational leadership faculty who have a genuine understanding of the challenges of school leadership today,” she added.

Serving both Carolinas, the **Educational Leadership Program** at Winthrop is a two-year master's degree program solidly based on the **Educational Leadership Constituency Council Standards**. The program has substantial, three-semester internships that require each student to complete 55 practical experiences, all of which are related to the time of year when principals normally complete this work.

The **Winthrop Educational Leadership Program** has a guiding philosophy that “leadership is a humble service and that successful leadership is determined by the success of those being led.”

The Bush Institute is working to redefine the role of America's school leaders through AREL's broad alliance of innovative principal preparation programs.

“We all know student learning is determined by the effectiveness of teachers, but one good teacher's impact can fade if students don't benefit from effective teachers in subsequent years,” said **Dr. Kerri Briggs**, program director for education reform at the Bush Institute. “Our nation's 90,000 principals are the critical element required to maintain that learning momentum, so it is our duty to make sure that every school has an effective leader.”

The principal plays a critical role in advancing student achievement in today's public schools. Principals must set the vision and create a culture of success on campus, oversee all human capital aspects including the hiring, developing and releasing of teachers, and set the expectations necessary to improve achievement for nearly 50 million students attending public school every day.

AREL is focused on creating a collaborative network of preparation programs that are focused on AREL's nine competency standards. The standards include a more rigorous principal selection process, targeted principal training, a meaningful clinical leadership experience and continuously evaluating graduates' effectiveness in raising student achievement.

Winthrop assists with another AREL newly named partner, [Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools](#). The Charlotte, N.C., school district partners with [Queens University of Charlotte's School Executive Leadership Academy](#) and [Winthrop's Leaders for Tomorrow](#) in an effort to significantly improve the district's school leadership toward raising student achievement.

The other new AREL principal preparation sites are: [Delaware Leadership Project](#); [Hillsborough Country Public Schools Preparing New Principals Program](#) in Tampa, Fla.; [Loyola University Chicago Principal Preparation Program](#); the [Boston College Lynch Leadership Academy](#); the [Mary Jane Patterson Fellowship with the District of Columbia Public Schools' Aspiring Leaders Program](#) in Washington, D.C.; the [Morgridge College of Education Leadership Preparation](#) in Denver, Colo., and the [School Executive Leadership Academy](#) in Charlotte, N.C.

A generous commitment from [AT&T](#) supported the launch of the AREL initiative in 2010, and partnership with AT&T has been instrumental in the success of AREL and the continued expansion of the program in 2012. The [Sid W. Richardson Foundation](#), dedicated to funding meaningful organizations to improve our society, continues to be an important partner in supporting the ongoing development and expansion of the AREL program through 2015.

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