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Winthrop University

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Winthrop University Launches Postsecondary Initiative for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Quick Facts

- The Winthrop Transition to College grant will total \$155,000 over three years and is the fifth project to be funded in South Carolina.
- The inclusive program is designed to provide high school students ages 18-21 with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities the opportunity to participate with their same-aged peers.



Donald Bailey presents the grant check to Winthrop officials.

ROCK HILL, S.C. - Winthrop officially launched the **Winthrop Transition to College (WTC)** program on Oct. 26 to provide postsecondary opportunities for high school students with intellectual disabilities from the Rock Hill and Fort Mill school districts.

The **College Transition Connection (CTC)** is funding the development of this innovative model program, with financial support from the state of South Carolina. CTC Chair **Donald Bailey**

announced that the grant will total \$155,000 over three years and is the fifth project to be funded in South Carolina. "Winthrop has the reputation for being one of the best teaching institutions in the nation, and we are excited to have them include a program for young adults with intellectual disabilities to continue their education," said Bailey.

State Superintendent of Education **Jim Rex** joined Winthrop Vice President **Tom Moore**, Board of Trustee member **Sue Smith-Rex**, Rock Hill School District Superintendent **Lynn Moody**, Fort Mill School District Superintendent **Chuck Epps**, Winthrop and school district faculty, CTC board members, WTC Winthrop student mentors, and students with disabilities and their parents when the program was announced Oct. 26 at Winthrop.

The **National Down Syndrome Society** is providing technical assistance and grant administration for CTC. "This innovative partnership between school districts, Winthrop University, and their College of Education will benefit the students involved and provide hands-on teacher training that will improve education in South Carolina now and in years to come," said **Stephanie Smith Lee**, the society's senior policy advisor.

The inclusive program is designed to provide high school students ages 18 to 21 with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities the opportunity to participate with their same-aged peers in Winthrop academic, recreational, social and employment experiences. With the support of peer mentors, Winthrop Transition to College students are participating in academic and recreational classes, attending campus clubs and gaining employment experience in part-time jobs on campus.

Seven high school students are attending the program this fall. The **Winthrop Transition to College** is co-lead by the following Winthrop faculty: **Caroline Everington**, associate dean of the Richard W.

Riley College of Education; **Debra Leach**, assistant professor of special education; and **Antigo Martin-Delaney**, associate professor of school psychology. Assisting from the school districts are: **Lynn Helms**, special education head teacher, Rock Hill High School; **Brenda Graham**, transition coordinator, Rock Hill School District; and **Laura Antinoro**, transition specialist, Fort Mill School District. **Michelle Foster** coordinates the program.

The **Winthrop Transition to College Program** is supported by a partnership between College Transition Connection, National Down Syndrome Society and the Center for Disability Resources at the University of South Carolina.

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