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Winthrop University

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# Involvement a Key Theme of Mahony's Convocation Advice to Freshmen

## Quick Facts

- President Dan Mahony, who assumed the presidency on July 1, offered freshmen advice during his Convocation keynote address.
- Convocation serves as an official welcome to freshmen and their induction into the Winthrop community of learners.
- Convocation kicks off Winthrop's 130th academic year.



*President Dan Mahony*

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – Winthrop University **President Dan Mahony** shared advice and stories from his own college experience during his keynote address, entitled “**Advice from One Winthrop Freshman to the Other Freshmen,**” at the university’s Aug. 24 Convocation ceremony.

**Convocation** serves as an official welcome to freshmen and their induction into the Winthrop community of learners, and officially kicks off the fall semester.

He related how his only focus when he began college was his studies, which isn’t bad, he said, but he believes now he should have been more involved in campus organizations and activities from the start. He encouraged the freshmen to meet new people... in their residence halls, classes and other outlets, and to get involved in organizations and to attend events.

He reflected on his experience of pledging a fraternity and running for Student Government Association treasurer. “I got beat and got beat badly,” Mahony said, noting that sometimes things did not always go perfectly. However, Mahony said that a few weeks later he was elected president pro tempore of the Senate, which led to him being named vice president and then president of the student body.

He also suggested that students take advantage of electives and general education classes to explore topics outside of their majors that interest them.

Finally, Mahony offered a few other pieces of advice, including:

- Find where you excel and make it your passion: “We all have different skills, abilities and passions. But you have to find out for yourself, no one else can tell you,” Mahony explained.
- You have to be all in: “If you do you will find out more about your skills, abilities and passions. We are all here first and foremost for our students and there is lots of support available, but we need you to take advantage of the opportunities available – we can’t force you,” Mahony added.
- Go to class.
- Get involved.
- Stay around campus as much as possible: “Don’t run home every weekend. Go to the speeches, the games, the plays and the performances,” he said.
- Take the time to meet people.
- Take risks: “As my dad used to say, ‘What is the worst that can happen?’ That simple question has kept me from doing stupid things, but also freed me up to take many risks. The most successful people have failed and failed a lot. The difference is they have the grit and determination to battle through the failures until they are successful,” Mahony encouraged.
- Have fun!

Mahony also added that his words of advice ring true for him as a new university president. “Best of luck, we are about to start an incredible journey,” he said.

For more information on Convocation, please contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at 803/323-2404 or email [longshawj@winthrop.edu](mailto:longshawj@winthrop.edu).

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