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Winthrop University

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Organization Recognizes Winthrop for Its Return on Investment

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. – AffordableCollegesOnline.org – a resource for college affordability and financial aid information – has identified Winthrop University as one of the top five South Carolina public universities with the greatest lifetime return on investment.

The online organization noted that graduates of schools on its list enjoy the largest earnings gap between non-degree holders over a 30-year span. AffordableCollegesOnline.org founder Dan Schuessler said the criteria his organization used is important for prospective students to consider.

Winthrop President Jayne Marie (Jamie) Comstock said the university is pleased to be recognized by this new rating organization. “This recognition affirms that Winthrop offers the quality of a private education at a public price,” said Comstock. “When families consider the value-added of Winthrop’s high level of personal attention to students, the strength of our academic programs, and the full collegiate experience we offer, I am certain that they see that the return on investment from Winthrop is even better than indicated.”

AffordableCollegesOnline.org used the following criteria for those with the highest return on investment:

- Fully accredited institution
- Either public or private
- Four-year, degree-granting institution
- Return on investment according to PayScale’s 2013 College Value Report

ACO founder Dan Schuessler said the criteria are important for prospective students to consider. “We’ve sifted through comprehensive data sources to find colleges and universities in South Carolina that offer a high quality education with consistent, long-term payoffs in the workplace,” he said.

According to the ACO statistics, Winthrop graduates earn $295,900 more than those without degrees over a three-decade period. To arrive at the figure, the organization used criteria gathered from the following authoritative data sets:

- **NCES**: the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education. It provides consistent, reliable, complete, and accurate indicators of education status and trends.
- **IPEDS**: the primary federal source for data on colleges, universities, and technical and vocational postsecondary schools in the U.S.
- **Carnegie Classification**: a framework widely used in the study of higher education, both as a way to represent and control for institutional differences, and also in the design of research studies to ensure adequate representation of sampled institutions, students, or faculty.
- **PayScale.com**: the premier salary data collection organization.

To check out the rankings, visit [http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/online-colleges/south-](http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/online-colleges/south-).
This is one of several recent accolades for Winthrop. The university stands out in the region among public universities for its long track record with U.S. News and its inclusion in the Princeton Review, which has rated Winthrop among its “Best Southeastern Colleges” and placed it in its “Guide to 322 Green Colleges.” In addition, Winthrop was the only South Carolina institution cited in the 2011 “Beating the Odds” report by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in helping students, particularly minority students, most prone to dropping out of college stay on track toward graduation.

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