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# Geology Professor Irene Boland To Be Recognized at Dec. 15 Commencement

## Quick Facts

- Boland will receive the 2012 Kinard award for teaching from President Anthony DiGiorgio during the Dec. 15 undergraduate Commencement ceremony at Winthrop Coliseum.
- Her department chair, Pat Owens of the Department of Chemistry, Physics and Geology, said Boland has hit her stride in the past decade.



Irene Boland

ROCK HILL, S.C. – **Geology Professor Irene Boland**, a Winthrop alumna who found a passion for geology in the mid-1980s and earned a Ph.D. in the field a decade later, is possibly Winthrop's ultimate life-long learner.

She will receive the **2012 Kinard award** for teaching from **President Anthony DiGiorgio** during the Dec. 15 **undergraduate Commencement ceremony** at **Winthrop Coliseum**.

The **James Pinckney Kinard and Lee Wicker Kinard Award for Excellence in Teaching** is awarded annually to the faculty member who has demonstrated a dedication to teaching and is highly regarded on campus by faculty and students. The award was established by the Kinard family in honor of former Winthrop President James P. Kinard and his wife, Lee Wicker Kinard.

Boland graduated from Winthrop with a chemistry and biology degree in 1963, then completed her M.A.T. in chemistry in 1969. During the mid-1980s, while teaching part-time at Winthrop, she was given a text on plate tectonics and discovered a passion for geology. She earned a Ph.D. in 1996, a mere 33 years after completing her undergraduate degree.

Her department chair, **Pat Owens** of the **Department of Chemistry, Physics and Geology**, said Boland has hit her stride in the past decade. Consider:

- In 2000, she was one of two **Phi Kappa Phi Excellence in Teaching Award recipients** in a year when there were more than 100 nominations. The award is student-chosen.
- Winthrop does not offer a geology major, so Boland teaches **General Education Touchstone geology courses, earth science** and **upper level geology courses** for science majors. Boland does an exceptional job in explaining how the earth has changed since its formation, Owens said, particularly for those who are not science majors.
- Boland incorporates **extensive field trips** into her geology laboratory courses, much of which has been done at personal expense. One course requires students to spend a Saturday traveling around the Palmetto state to see key geological sites from the mountains to the coast. She also pursues geology field trips around the world to learn more and to return with samples. For instance, in 2010 she participated in a **15-day trip to Iceland**.
- Several years ago, Boland wrote a chapter on how geology affected the **American Revolutionary battle of Eutaw Springs** in a book focusing on military geology, a newly emerging field.
- Boland won a research council grant to develop a new laboratory manual for **Winthrop's Earth and Space Science sequence**, which has been finished and is aligned with the S.C. K-12 learning

standards.

- Winthrop has no laboratory support staff for geology, so Boland has shouldered the bulk of administrative responsibilities, plus she schedules all geology courses and laboratories.
- This past spring, the National Park Service published the Digital Geologic Map for Cowpens National Battlefield. About 90 percent of the map was completed by Boland, an effort that took years of work, Owens said.
- Boland also has served in leadership positions, including as president of the [Carolina Geological Society](#), and more recently, was chosen by the Winthrop president as **Faculty Marshal**.

**Peter Judge**, dean of the [College of Arts and Sciences](#), wrote that Boland understands Winthrop’s core values of student learning. “It is clear that she is a hard-working teacher and tireless researcher, dedicated to student learning above and beyond the norm and is devoted to maintaining high standards,” he said.

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

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