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Former Members of the Association of Ebonites Gather for Oct. 12 Reunion

Winthrop University

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Former Members of the Association of Ebonites Gather for Oct. 12 Reunion

Quick Facts

- Former and current AOE members will perform song, dance and an oral presentation at 3 p.m. in Tillman Auditorium. A reception will follow.
- Kinyata Brown, the university's director of diversity and student engagement, said the association remains a strong testament to the contributions of African Americans to the Winthrop campus.



Association of Ebonites in 1989



Ebonites Gospel Choir in 1994

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA - The final event for Winthrop University's golden anniversary integration week activities is an Oct. 12 reunion concert by the Association of Ebonites (AOE).

Chartered in 1969, the group was the first African-American student organization on campus and remains today a strong asset in promoting the understanding of black culture.

Former and current AOE members will perform song, dance and an oral presentation at the 3 p.m. concert in **Tillman Auditorium**. A reception will follow.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the organization sponsored **Black Week** to encourage appreciation of fashion, social issues and entertainment.

Over the years, many of the activities – organization elections, community service, concerts and social events - are chronicled in annual scrapbooks available in the **Louise Pettus Archives**. In fact those scrapbooks offer an insight that few other Winthrop student organizations offer.

"These scrapbooks are invaluable," said **archivist Gina White**, "in showing the history and activities of this organization and its contribution to the fabric of Winthrop student life."

In 2000, the association was the largest student organization on campus with more than 200 members. Many of those members belonged to the association's **Ebonites Gospel Choir** which performed in the region and competed against other college choirs.

The 2003-04 scrapbook boasted that its gospel choir ranked third nationally.

Kinyata Brown, the university's director of the **diversity and student engagement office**, said the association remains a strong testament to the contributions of African Americans to the Winthrop campus.

The Oct. 12 event is sponsored by the **Office of the President** and the **50th Anniversary Coordinating Committee**. Archives will have a display of old photographs and association

scrapbooks. The event is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact **Brown** at 803/323-4508 or brownka@winthrop.edu.

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