



Fall 12-11-2016

Winthrop Students Create Bilingual Books for Area Agencies to Display

Winthrop University

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Recommended Citation

Winthrop University, "Winthrop Students Create Bilingual Books for Area Agencies to Display" (2016). *Winthrop News 2016*. 220. <https://digitalcommons.winthrop.edu/winthropnews2016/220>

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Winthrop Students Create Bilingual Books for Area Agencies to Display

Quick Facts

- Jamilyn Larsen, who works in the dean's office for the College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) noted that clients for some local agencies were Hispanic families with young children who spoke Spanish as their first language.
- She proposed a community project that involved Winthrop education, world languages and design faculty and their students to create, illustrate and publish the Spanish/English children's books.



ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – A Winthrop University social work graduate student came up with a project that will help Hispanic children learn to read in their family's native tongue.

Jamilyn Larsen, who works in the dean's office for the [College of Visual and Performing Arts \(CVPA\)](#), noted that clients for some local agencies were Hispanic families with young children who spoke Spanish as their first language. While these social service agencies had a variety of reading materials in their public areas, Larsen observed that few of the reading materials were in Spanish.

"When bilingual books were added to one agency, I saw a parent who was learning English reading one of the books with their school-aged child," Larsen said. "I realized that the books were creating a bond between the adult and child, improving the English language skills of the parent, and instilling the importance of reading in the child."

She proposed a community project that involved Winthrop education, world languages and design faculty and their students to create, illustrate and publish the Spanish/English children's books, said **Andrew Vorder Bruegge**, CVPA assistant dean and graduate program director. Students are distributing the bilingual children's books this month to selected social service agencies in York County who regularly serve Hispanic families as clients.

The content for the four books created, while having between 16 and 20 pages, is suitable for young readers through the fourth grade.

Here is how the project worked:

- Education students in the READ 290 summer course created the original stories in English, then students in Spanish 102 translated the text into Spanish.
- Illustration students in VCOM 423 created imagery and design for the books this fall. Once all the forty illustrations were created, the books were edited and prepared for printing by the team of faculty members.
- The books then went to students in the ARTE 528 course, who stitched draft versions of the books to be shared with focus groups at several elementary schools in the area.
- Feedback from those schools was used to make final edits to the books before the final printing.
- Winthrop's Printing Services printed the books.

Vorder Bruegge envisions this initiative as a **pilot project** that could grow into a sustained, long-term community engagement effort for Winthrop. The editorial board of faculty members, called the **Winthrop Publishing Group**, will use the experience gained to identify other opportunities to serve the most vulnerable families in the community and then seek inside and outside funding.

Faculty members involved are **G. David Brown**, design; **Bettie Parsons Barger**, education; **Victoria Uricoechea**, world languages; **Laura Gardner**, fine arts; and **Casey Cothran**, English.

Already support for this project is provided by the **Arts Council of York County Small Grants Program**, the **John and Susan Bennett Memorial Arts Fund of the Coastal Community Foundation of S.C.**, and the **S.C. Arts Commission**, which received funding from the National Endowments for the Arts.

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