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Decision 2016: Educating and Activating Student Voting Power

Winthrop University

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Decision 2016: Educating and Activating Student Voting Power

Quick Facts

- Politics played an important role on Winthrop's campus through the November General Election thanks to efforts spearheaded by Frank Ardaiole, vice president for student life, and Karen Kedrowski, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.
- Student Voting Ambassadors registered more than 300 students and handed out nearly 500 "check your voter registration" cards and 250 flyers describing absentee voting.
- Campus clubs, organizations and academic departments held more than 30 election-related events with a total attendance of over 2,000 students.



Students volunteered to register other students to vote.

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – With Winthrop's **Decision 2016** activities, politics permeated the campus through the November General Election.

A coalition of students, staff and faculty worked to **register students, educate them about the election, and encourage voter turnout**. The effort was led by Frank Ardaiole, vice president for **student life**, and **Karen Kedrowski**, dean of the **College of Arts and Sciences**.

Student Voting Ambassadors registered **more than 300 students** and handed out **nearly 500 "check your voter registration" cards** and **250 flyers describing absentee voting**. Campus clubs, organizations and academic departments held **more than 30 election-related events** with a total attendance of more than **2,000 students**.

Winthrop seeks to become a **Voter Friendly Campus**, a designation awarded by NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and the **Campus Vote Project**. If awarded, Winthrop may advertise its Voter Friendly Campus designation through the 2018 election.

Winthrop also is competing in the **All In Campus Democracy Challenge**. Participating institutions will earn "badges" based upon its student voter turnout.

"Decision 2016 let us carry the excitement of the primary campaign into the fall semester," said **Kedrowski**. "We want Winthrop students to become active, informed citizens."

Ardaiole continued, "We know that early voting habits can last a lifetime. These efforts significantly advance Winthrop's mission to educate students through active engagement for an informed citizenry."

According to the **National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement**, 53 percent of Winthrop students voted in 2012, a rate higher than the national average and the average for public, master's-level institutions.

For more information, contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at 803/323-2404 or longshawj@winthrop.edu.

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