

1923-2023 THE JOHNSONIAN *centennial*



Winthrop University

March 30, 2023

Rock Hill, SC

Student artists allegedly conned out of opportunity to table at DSU event

Students say their rejection may have been retaliation for speaking out against DSU's use of AI art in their promotions for past Fun Stuffed event.

Ainsley McCarthy
News Editor

Students in the illustration department are alleging that university entertainment organization DSU is intentionally punishing them for commenting on their disappointment that the group used artificial intelligence-generated art for the promotional materials advertising their Fun Stuffed event, which was held on Feb. 14.

DSU made an Instagram post featuring the art in question,

whose comment section became a host for conversation—namely among students and community members criticizing the unoriginality of the art—calling the move “disrespectful.”

“(I’m) really disappointed that the school has an illustration program and yet they completely disrespect it and the students in it by using AI art instead of, oh I (don’t know), actually considering one of the students,” former Winthrop Illustration student Adam Seats

said. “Consider this if you are thinking of going to Winthrop,” he added.

A DSU representative responded to Seats’ comment saying, “We thank you for your passionate and concerted comment. If you were not aware, we have two designers from (the college of visual and performing arts) on our staff that work on some 60+ events in a year. They work hard to balance life, school and DSU,” they said.

“The amount of work we do requires

tight deadlines and high production.

We sometimes supplement with other elements to produce different pieces of material. Lastly, you have to be on the board to make our posts,” the representative said.

Responses to other comments of a similar sentiment included a Dolly Parton quote and a comment saying, “awww bears can keep you warm and bring a smile to your face...”



Made by Adam Seats

Adam Seats, former Winthrop illustration student, is a comic artist

cont. on pg. 2

Nation Ford Land Trust holds ceremony for 144 found graves

Descendants of those buried in former Lowry Plantation cemetery were given the chance to speak at “The 144: Honoring the Lost Ancestors”

Sam Hyatt
Guest Staff Writer

After the Lazenby family purchased 110 acres in York County, they were made aware of a few graves that were on the property by the previous owners. After doing research, they found that there were 144 graves on the property.

On February 25, 2023, Nation Ford Land Trust hosted an event called “The 144: Honoring the Lost Ancestors” on the property as “an opportunity for the greater community to

have a chance to see the cemetery, learn about the history of slave burial practices and ask questions to us (the landowners) and Nation Ford Land Trust,” Andrew Lazenby said.

Over 100 people attended the event, which included ticket holders, VIPs and the media. There were also descendants of the people interred in the cemetery that were located and invited to the event.

“These family members had a moment to speak, and they expressed the impor-

tance of protecting sites such as these as they are being lost at an alarming rate,” Lazenby said. “The event started in my workshop and eventually moved to the cemetery where a local bishop did a short dedication to these individuals. The participants were then able to walk among the markers alone or in groups and really let what they were doing sink in.”

Throughout the process of doing research and preserving the graves, the identity of the



Photo by Nation Ford Land Trust

144 graves were found on York county property

plantation and its owners were kept unannounced. The answers were revealed at the event held by the Nation Ford Land Trust.

“The 110-acre parcel that we own was once a part of the approximately 1500-acre Lowry Family Plantation,” Lazenby said. “We currently have a tremendous amount of informa-

tion on these individuals ranging from deeds, wills, marriage certificates, to diaries and receipts. This land was in the possession of the Lowry family from 1823-1945. The Lowry family was a cotton plantation, and they were the owners of the Lowry Cotton Company in what was then Yorkville, SC.”

Although this information has been gathered, questions remain about those who were enslaved. The information that has been gathered thus far is based on census records from that time that state how many were enslaved, their gender and a few names.

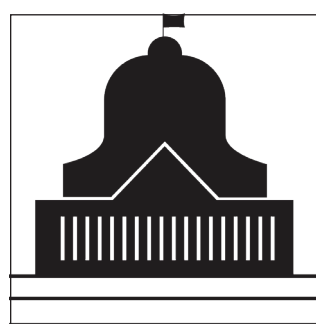
cont. on pg. 2

What's Inside:



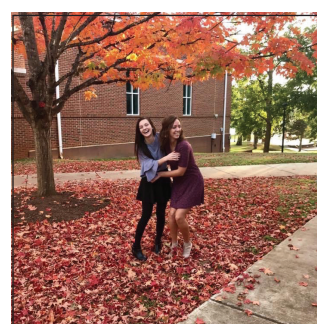
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	1,600	2,500	900
USC-Aiken	1,600	2,500	900
USC-Spart.	1,600	2,500	900
USC-Cola.	2,228	3,198	968
Winthrop	2,060	3,620	1,500

FIGURES FOR COLLEGE OF THE SOUTH EASTERN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE SOURCE: S.C. HIGHER EDUCATIONAL STATISTICAL ABSTRACT 2018 AND 2019 UPDATE FROM THE OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

ANNUAL STUDENT ACADEMIC FEES AT WINTHROP		
Category	1988-89	1994-95
Registration	\$10	\$20
Tuition	50	130
Athletic Debt	48	50
Educational and	1,596	2,604

27 years of inflation

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Marley Bassett | Editor-in-Chief

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Police Blotter



Marley Bassett
Editor-in-Chief

Driver arrested on marijuana and permit violations

The subject was originally pulled over for driving left of center. They were discovered to be in violation of their beginner's permit. The officer smelled a mixture of marijuana and alcohol and then observed the subject attempting to hide a joint. The subject was then issued two citations and the vehicle was towed on March 18.

Subject issued warning for drup paraphenila possession

A subject was driving without a tag light and an officer pulled them over. The officer smelled marijuana and the subject admitted to smoking earlier. The passenger was found to have a bong in their fanny pack and the subject was issued a warning on March 19.

Three subjects arrested for public intoxication

WUPO was called to assist RHPD with a disorderly situation involving a Hispanic male and female. RHPD took all three subjects into police custody on the charge of public disorderly intoxication. The scene was then cleared by an officer on March 19.

Possible fight in Phelps Hall

Officers responded to a call pertaining to a possible fight on the second floor of Phelps Hall. The parties involved said that nothing was physical, just verbal. Both students were then referred to the Dean of Students office on March 25.

Cont. from pg. 1: Student artists conned out of WUCon

They're cuddly and soft. We'll even have purring devices that can simulate a cat without the risks of a live cat. That's like so not disappointing."

The identity of the representative(s) behind DSU's comments is unclear. One post was deleted, and the comments were disabled on the other.

Senior Illustration major, Kaelen Baur, said students are prohibited from using AI art in academic assignments, so she doesn't understand why a university-sponsored organization should be able to use it.

She said the use of AI art in her courses would violate the terms of the plagiarism section on all of her syllabi. The syllabus for her senior thesis II course in visual communication reads, "academic dishonesty also occurs when the fundamental goals of an assignment are subverted, and methods of design production violate project guidelines. This

would include but is not limited to the following circumstances: use of a computer or other mechanical device to execute work that is directed to be done through pencil or pen and ink; use of a transfer process—chemical or physical—to reproduce designs which are directed to be rendered by hand through pencil or pen and ink, use of clip (or other prepared artwork), use of photographic image without attribution, use of computer code or algorithm not authored by student, etc."

Nathaniel Frederick, a media law professor in the department of mass communication said, "this dilemma demonstrates the complexity of media law and technology, and that the law has not caught up with technology. Our way of thinking about ethics and technology is an evolving phenomenon."

Seats said he thought it was espe-

cially insensitive to use AI art while its legitimacy was being debated in the United States Copyright Office. The office ruled that AI art cannot be copyrighted on Feb. 14.

Both Seats and Baur said that each of the applicants who sought to table at WUCon who also commented in opposition under the aforementioned Instagram posts were all rejected.

Application results were released 12 days ahead of the actual event, which Baur said is not enough time to get outsourced products like buttons and stickers back to the artist. She said that in her experience, the process usually takes two and a half to three weeks.

Seats said the same and estimated that he had lost a chance to sell about \$1,100 in stock.

An anonymous DSU board member said the AI poster, and the assertion that no one who commented negatively under the

original posts would be accepted to vend were at first presented among board members as jokes.

They said they offered to create a poster design for Fun Stuffed, but because the AI design was already made, it was posted against their advice not to do so.

According to the anonymous board member, DSU will no longer be using AI in their advertisements.

They also said that when they asked leadership if they could share their table at WUCon, they were told that the traditions and special events committee had chosen specific vendors to promote a variety of products, and that sharing tables would go against the committee's efforts to "curate" the experience.

DSU's traditions and special events chair, Rosie Seidl sent an email to vendors addressing tabling requirements which said, "We have accepted each of you because we valued

your art and what you stated in your application. We want to ensure each of you has the chance to show off your hard work and maximize potential customers. Sharing a table will go against our trust in you and thus lead to your inability to remain at the event."

The message also banned selling work with depictions of "profanity and vulgarity," calling WUCon a family-friendly event.

The vendor application asked artists to provide a sample and brief description of their work, their opinion on the value of WUCon to the community and why they want to be a vendor.

It remains unclear exactly who was responsible for selecting successful applicants.

Willie Bush, DSU's assistant for campus programs and events, has not responded to The Johnsonian's request for comment as of March 28.

Cont. from pg. 1: Nation Ford Land Trust graves ceremony

"After emancipation it seems as though the cemetery was used by former slaves and sharecroppers as these would be the stones that are sitting above the ground with initials," Lazenby said. "As the enslaved gained their freedom there were black community churches built that had associated cemeteries. The cemetery on the Lowry plantation was used less and less and the collective memory faded, or individuals were barred from gaining access to it. Eventually it was simply forgotten."

By opening this event to the public, the Lazenby's and the Nation Ford Land Trust were able to bring awareness to

the numerous lost grave sites and cemeteries in the south while also allowing the descendants to have this connection with their ancestors.

"This is just one of countless cemeteries of the enslaved that have been lost and neglected over the years," Winthrop associate professor Brent Woodfill said. "Every person in that cemetery lived a life that was not theirs to live and was forced to serve others based exclusively on the family they were born into. Even after their death they were robbed of their identity by being left in unmarked graves that were lost to time. Their family members and descendants were robbed of that

connection too until the cemetery was finally rediscovered. In order for healing from and reckoning with the horrors of the past to occur, we need to be connected to it."

Lazenby acknowledges the extensive growth that the York and Rock Hill area is experiencing and how this development can cause the loss of open spaces and woodlands.

"While this growth brings positives such as economic benefits, it also comes at a loss of open spaces and woodlands," Lazenby said. "Once developed, there is no way to 'undevelop' the land so it's important to find landowners who are willing to donate their develop-

ment rights to their lands to organizations such as Nation Ford Land Trust or Katawba Valley Land Trust to remove the option of the land ever being converted into residential or commercial use."

The Lazenby's worked with numerous people throughout the process and are thankful for the help of the artisans and researchers.

"David Gillespie of Pumkingtown Primitives was responsible for the carving of the markers for each gravesite," Lazenby said. "Callico Graves of Iron Giant Fabrication for the design and construction of the fence and upcoming gates. Joel Hohmann was instrumental in researching

and compiling the history of Fishing Creek Place (the properties name) and helping to tell the story of these lost souls."

Before the event, the Lazenby's were able to have the fence around the perimeter of the graves completed.

"Each post will have a finial consisting of an Andinkra symbol that the individuals who are interred in the cemetery would possibly recognize," Lazenby said. "This was done to honor their history and culture from the west coast of Africa where the vast majority of the enslaved were captured."



“Legion of Doom”: The threatening alliance of China and Russia

This week in American politics

David Ibragimov
Staff Writer

As the world becomes more globalized, nations look to expand, extending their global participation through alliances, peace treaties, international trade and cooperation through bi-military drills as signs of stability between two or more nations. However, international scholars have noticed a trend that some alliances are happening not due to interest in mutual development, but rather in order to unify against a common rival. American officials are concerned about the extensive cooperation between officials of the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation.

However, a number of international events have concerned U.S. officials; Since 2014, the world has been rocked by the attacks of the

Russian Federation against Ukrainian Crimea, which continued with an all-out open invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. While Russia has focused on warfare, China has also implemented actions that have worked to solidify its spot as a world superpower, at times rivaling that of the U.S. In 2022, Saudi Arabia, the biggest exporter of oil, considered accepting the Chinese Yuan instead of dollars for oil sales after years of strenuous relations with the U.S.

In 2023, China made news waves across the international community by successfully brokering a peace negotiation between Iran and Saudi Arabia, two countries that have broken relations since 2016 and have been in high political tensions. Both countries hope that these negotiations improve relations and peace

in the Middle East and have commended the Chinese diplomats and officials for being the tools of negotiations between the two countries. Although beneficial to the Middle East, the negotiations also indicate that some nations, particularly those that have had unsteady relations with the U.S., now believe that China is the most qualified country to lead international progress, such as peace negotiations.

Separately, each represents different aspects of competition to the U.S., with Russia directly attempting to combat democratic principles while China presents an alternative to the world dominance of the U.S.

After Russia began its invasion of Ukraine, the majority of the world, including the U.S., placed either severe or total economic sanctions



David Ibragimov/The Johnsonian

on the Russian government and its oligarchs. The sanctions due to the war have not only affected Russian government officials, but also Russian artists all over the world. Some examples could be seen when artists like the singer Anna Netrebko and conductor Valery Gergiev were banned from performing on stages in New York and most of Europe for refusing or hesitating to condemn the actions of the Russian government.

Despite these conditions, Putin continues the war against Ukraine without an end in sight. Many

experts have concluded that the reason Russia is able to continue fighting this war is because of the behind-the-scenes support from China.

“Chinese firms have already provided “non-lethal support” to Russia, and it has new information suggesting Beijing could soon provide “lethal support”. “China has not overtly supplied Russia with weapons but may be secretly selling it hi-tech products, which could be used for military purposes.

“There is evidence that China is the biggest exporter of semiconductors -

often through shell companies in Hong Kong and the UAE - to Russia. Some Chinese companies are also supplying civilian drones, exploiting the gray space between military and civilian purposes,” said Maria Shagina, an expert in economic sanctions at the International Institute of Strategic Studies.

Although the two countries have kept a distance in front of the world stage, the tightening alliance between both of the U.S.’s biggest rivals may bring to future international, political and economic changes.

Student Spotlight: Henry Waldrep

Henry Waldrep, Secretary-General of the Winthrop Model United Nations Conference and former track athlete, talks about being led by his passions and being a student athlete at Winthrop.

Jeremiah Williams
Staff Writer

Henry Waldrep, a junior political science major and philosophy minor, was led to Winthrop chasing a dream, and found a new passion while he studied politics and philosophy. He was brought onto the Winthrop track team as a walk-on by coach Ben Paxton.

Waldrep was a varsity captain of his cross country team in high school and All-Region athlete. “When looking at colleges, track was a big factor in my choice,” Waldrep said. “I knew I wasn’t going to be the star athlete...but I accomplished my dream of running Division One track. I’m satisfied with my running career, and I’m satisfied with how it ended.”

Henry Waldrep spent his childhood in Greenville but went to high school in Travelers Rest, South Carolina. While he credits his passion for debate and discussion to his personality, it was his close friends at this high school that he believes really taught him to be open minded.

“I’m really grateful that I practiced open-mindedness and self-awareness. I really trained myself before I even came to college and it really helped a lot. It very much helped transitioning into this compared to what I was used to at home.”

Waldrep said he was raised in a conservative political culture, and he admitted to some culture shock when he came to college. He

said his adaptation to Winthrop was a slow but successful one and that he eventually grew to love the culture and climate.

His participation in the Model U.N. program played a major role in this.

“I tell people all the time that if I was as passionate about my academics and track as I am about Model U.N., I’d have a 4.0 GPA and I’d be the fastest guy on the team,” Waldrep said.

“When I had gotten accepted into Winthrop University, I was called by Dr. Disney who congratulated me on my acceptance into Winthrop University. She asked me why I was interested in political science and said that I would really like Winthrop’s Model UN program,” he added.



Courtesy of Winthrop University

Since then, Henry Waldrep has not only had award-winning performances at Winthrop University’s own conference as both delegate and committee chair, but also at the Southern Regional Model U.N. Conference in Atlanta, Georgia last semester.

In a role normally given to graduating seniors, he now serves as the lead organizer of the forty-seventh Winthrop University Model U.N. to be held from March 29-31 as secretary general. Alongside director-general Alyssa Robinson, a graduating senior and leader in the Socialist

Student Union, and Coordinator-General Hannah Switzer, a junior political science major and president of the Zeta Tau Alpha sorority chapter on campus, these three are at the helm of the largest Model U.N. conference in the state.

Waldrep said that passion and self-reflection is what motivates Waldrep to continue to seek out discussion and debate even amongst so much tense disagreement in today’s divided political climate. Although he no longer runs for the track team, he hopes to focus on his academics for his final year at Winthrop and

pursue a master’s degree after graduation.

“If I could leave any legacy, I want the Model U.N. program to be great and I want to leave it great, and I don’t want it to be credited to me either. I just want for it to be for other people what it was for me.”

Alumni Spotlight – Jessica Coffin “first year teaching was a complete whirlwind” but felt prepared from WU college of education

2020 alumni graduated from Winthrop to teach in Hawaii

Sam Hyatt
Guest Writer

Jessica Coffin, an alumni from the class of 2020, graduated from the college of education at Winthrop University and is using her degree to teach second grade at a private school in Oahu, Hawaii.

While at Winthrop, she did not get the chance to take many classes outside of her major so many of her favorite classes were from the education department.

“I absolutely loved Dr. Barger’s Children’s Literature course,” Coffin said. “It was my favorite class I took in my time at Winthrop. It helped me grow a love of reading and a love of sharing reading with my students now. I still have my folder of books and their reviews in my classroom so I can add new books to my wish list each year.”



Coffin loved those in the education department and has been able to use the lessons taught in those classes in her current classroom.

“The entire team of Early Education professors were amazing, and I learned so, so much from them,” Coffin said. “I also loved Dr. Glover’s courses, where excellent classroom management and lesson planning was modeled for us. We would be the students in the classroom and go through the lesson and learning centers as my students do now. It was

so meaningful and has been so useful in my career now.”

Two of the most impactful professors, while she was at Winthrop, were Dr. Glover and Dr. Barger because they cared about their students’ academic and personal lives.

“Dr. Glover, as my advisor played a huge role in my future,” Coffin said. “She encouraged me to pursue teaching opportunities that were out of my community, even when others doubted the idea. She made learning personal and enjoyable but also

relative and helpful for a career.”

Coffin said that she remembers Glover bringing in donuts on early Monday morning classes if the Panthers won a game.

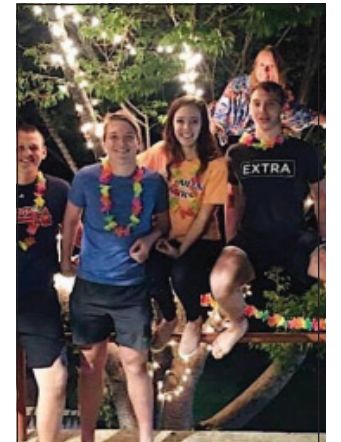
“Dr. Barger was someone I always admired and respected because of her passion for teaching,” Coffin said. “It was so obvious that she cared about what she was teaching us and believed in the lessons she was teaching.”

After graduating, Coffin said that although she felt prepared to teach from her education at

Winthrop, there were lessons and skills that she learned better in the classroom.

“There were some things that, I believe, I could only learn from experience,” Coffin said. “Building relationships with parents and learning new curriculum, and for this area, an entirely new culture at the school, took time and practice. I am still learning these skills and trying new methods as I am exposed to more styles of teaching.”

Coffin said that she felt prepared to teach and was confident



going in because of the practice she had with internships and placements in the education program.

“My very first year teaching was a complete whirlwind, but I would have been nowhere near as prepared without the placements at Winthrop,” Coffin said. “You can teach classroom management strategies all day long, but until you are in the classroom alone for the first time you have no idea what to expect. My first job had very little training or support, so my time at Winthrop was invaluable.”

Read more at mytjnow.com

Defying gravity through art: performing and visual arts combine for cultural event

DSU hosts aerialist, Allison Davey, to perform at Winthrop’s cultural event Aerial Arts



Zoe Jenkins
AC&T Editor

Zoe Jenkins/The Johnsonian

Allison Davey performing at DSU’s Aerial Arts culture event

peers or all three.

This was DSU’s Aerial Arts cultural event, which incorporated aerial performing arts with the option for the audience to make their own art through watercolors and coloring books.

The woman at the center of the event was Allison Davey, a certified instructor at Skyward Aerial Arts, LLC, located in Greenville, SC.

The goal of this event was to momentarily escape stress and schoolwork with an outlet that invoked creativity and expression by creativity and expression.

With inspiration from DSU’s previous cultural event, Art Therapy, the idea of adding an aerial performance was added because of a near experience that Cierra Thomason, a senior and chair of fine and performing arts, had.

“The first idea—this is going to sound so bad—was that my mom had an event with this aerialist, with the same artist, and we had to cancel because we didn’t have the setup, so I thought it would be great to bring it here because it was something we have never seen before,” said Thomason.

While knowing what aerial arts was, Thomason said, “The most I knew about aerial arts was Cirque du Soleil, but it’s very beautiful.”

Along with Thomason, Mackenzie Miller, a junior and member of the fine and performing

arts committee, had some familiarity with aerial arts.

While DSU was responsible for the art supplies and organizing the tables so that all the audience could see the performances, the larger pieces of the setup were on Davey.

been performing aerial arts since 2015. She gained her certification to coach in 2017.

“I used to be a dancer back when I was younger and I had seen (aerial) and I thought it would be the next level to dance. I actually connected with an aerial coach in the Greenville area. I took one class, and that was absolutely it. I fell in love, was there every week until I asked her to join her coaching team, and the rest is history from there,” Davey said.

For those interested in learning about aerial arts but who fear the athleticism and flexibility of it, Davey assures that students will build the strength and flexibility needed through training.

“The biggest thing that I see in my students is the motivation to keep coming back. It is something that the more consistency you have, the better you will get. So as long as you have the motivation and will to come to class, I say anybody can do it,” Davey said.

“The most I knew about aerial arts was Cirque du Soleil, but it’s very beautiful.”
- Thomason

arts committee, had some familiarity with aerial arts.

“I remember seeing aerial art on the World’s Greatest Circus like Barnum & Bailey and all that, so I’ve been used to seeing it there, but I was very interested in seeing how we were going to have

“With this whole setup, basically they brought all the rigging for it. This is something that she does often, where she brings the rigging with her because not everywhere is going to have a place where you can hang from the ceiling,” said Thomason.

Allison Davey has



Visit our website, mytjnow.com, to listen to our podcast, “On Air: The Johnsonian.” Also on Spotify.



Recap of WUcon: Combining Fandom and Art



Zoe Jenkins
AC&T Editor

Artists, cosplayers, panels, vendors, and Pokémon voice actress Veronica Taylor all gather for WUcon's second year

Picture of Archie Walker's friends Carrington Bartow, Roman Bennet Jones, Melody Guerin and Geo Fields posing in their cosplays

Winthrop's comic book convention, featuring vendors, panels, cosplay contests and more, returned for another year.

With vendors, panels, artists, cosplay contests, and even the voice actress Veronica Taylor, many students who are fans of anime and other entertainment had much to look forward to.

Taylor, most known for her role as Ash Ketchum in the English dubbed version of the Pokémon franchise for several seasons, was the guest star for the event, offering her presence at panels, meet-and-greet, and a judge for the cosplay contest.

Students could buy passes to see Taylor for \$15, in addition to their fee for entrance.

The main times for the event ran from 11 p.m.- 5 p.m., while the events with Taylor started at 4 p.m.

Other events included "From DSU to Hollywood," which happened at 2:30 p.m., and the cosplay contest at 2:30

p.m. The "From DSU to Hollywood" panel included two Winthrop alumni artists who have made it to larger corporations including Alrinthea Carter, a writer for HBO, and Mat Freschel, a photographer for Disney animation.

Other Winthrop artists had the opportunity to host vendors and sell items throughout the day.

One vendor was Archie Walker, a sophomore and art major, who sold their print-making art.

This isn't the first time that Walker has been to a comic convention, nor has it been his first time at WUcon.

"So this is my second year going, I went last year, which was their first year doing it, and I had a lot of fun. It was nice to get together with friends and dress up; I go to conventions pretty regularly so it's like a very small version. I actually went with my partner who has never been to a convention before and

he was super anxious about big crowds, so it was a good thing to implement him into it and I had him help run my table because I was a vendor," Walker said.

While at WUcon, Walker cosplayed as Vash from the anime reboot "Trigun Stampede".

While Walker liked some things about the event, such as having a big-name voice actor present, there were a couple of things he was willing to critique and suggest changing, mainly about how DSU ran things.

"First off, DSU going forward, if they want this to be successful like in upcoming years because I noticed a lot less from last year, just because last year had Tara Strong, they need to collaborate with AMC, which is the Anime Media Club. They need to directly talk to people who go to these things monthly and have direct experience with these kinds of events. The cosplay contest was a nightmare," Walker said.

Walker said he thought the contest was horrific because only one person was judging with Veronica Taylor, and that person was unaware of what half the costumes were.

"They need to categorize the contestants because in a real cosplay contest, there is the best performance, best overall, and there is best handmade or typically, DIY. That can set the difference between paying for the costume and that kind of stuff," Walker said.

For example, Walker lists someone who wore a Ghostbuster costume, and though, according to Walker, he looked really cool, the entire costume was bought, in contrast to other cosplayers such as the Jack Frost costume—who won— and a Genshin Impact cosplayer who handmade their costumes.

Walker also said, "I don't think they should have charged Vendor's Alley. I think paying ten dollars for the vendor's alley (by itself) was kind of ridiculous

because last year, it was free with a five-dollar purchase panel, and I know that was a gimmick to sell their all-access pass. I think that if they want to charge they need to have at least thirty (vendors) because (that) you have to pay money to spend money is a little weird."

Another vendor, Nyle Lottihall, a first-year freshman and theater major, had less criticism toward the event.

"WUcon, to me, was a chance for people who enjoy anime or any other type of entertainment media to come together and talk about their shared experiences with it or hang out," Lottihall said.

For Lottihall, this was his first time at WUcon and states that he had a really good experience.

"It was nice meeting Veronica Taylor and seeing all the other works that other students were doing. The cosplays were really cool," Lottihall said.

Although Lottihall did not go and see Taylor's panel, he did have a small talk with

her while he set up his table.

"It was a simple 'excuse me' and then I asked, 'What are you here to sell?' and she told me why she actually was here and what she was doing. I was like, 'Oh my god!' I'm not a huge Pokémon fan, but the only Ash Ketchum I knew was the one she voiced, so it kinda was like a big moment," Lottihall said.

While at WUcon, Lottihall sold 20 of his books and cosplayed as The Hunter from the videogame Bloodborne.

"What I liked was that they let any type of vendor come up and sell what they wanted," said Lottihall.

Similar to Walker, Lottihall had some criticism towards the cosplay event and said, "What I didn't like was probably the limitations on certain things, like how elaborate a cosplay could be." Despite this critique, Lottihall said, "I can't wait till next year for WUcon!"

The Thread Construction Update

After three months, Choate Construction has made significant progress on the development of the Thread.

Lily Hayes
Photographer



After three months, major changes have been made to what will eventually become the Thread, a college hang-out area filled with stores and restaurants.



Construction workers have cleared out large sections of the front wall which will eventually become a glass entranceway.



A construction worker sawing a hole into one of the floors to begin demolishing the part of the factory that will become the courtyard.



The factory elevator will soon be demolished, leaving only the elevator shaft to be refurbished for the Thread.

Xavier Cooks becomes first WU alum to play NBA basketball

After leading the Sydney Kings to back to back championships in Australia Cooks signs with the Washington Wizards

Maliik Cooper
Sports Editor

On March 5, 2023 Xavier Cooks signed with the National Basketball Association's Washington Wizards. This signing also officially made Cooks the first alum in Winthrop history to play in the NBA.

Cook's signing came after a run of dominance in Australia's National Basketball League. During the 2022 season he was named to the All-NBL Second Team. He also won the league's championship with the Sydney Kings and was named most valuable player of their championship series of games.

Cooks followed this in 2023 by making All-NBL First Team and winning the league's most valuable player award for the regular season. He and the Sydney Kings repeated this season as the back to back NBL champions.

Prior to his overseas career, Cooks was a star athlete at Winthrop. He was named to the Big South's all-freshman team his first year as an Eagle and followed that with three straight all-conference selections (with the final two being first team).

In 2018 during his final season at Winthrop Cooks was named the Big South conference's player of the year. He was top five in the conference in points, rebounds, assists, and blocks per game.

Winthrop's current men's basketball coach Mark Prosser was an assistant under former Eagles coach Pat Kelsey during Cooks' college career. In contrast to his high levels of production, it w Cooks' basketball IQ that impressed Prosser the most.

"Xavier just always had unbelievable basketball 'feel.' It's a

difficult thing to really define in words, he just understands the game so well. He was like having another coach on the court," coach Prosser said.

"He just knew where people and the ball should be, and when. He was obviously incredibly skilled, but his basketball acumen seemed to always set him apart."

Matt Erps is Winthrop men's basketball current video coordinator and was a member of the men's basketball team during Cooks' senior season in 2018. He offered a different perspective on the attributes that make Cooks so valuable as a player.

"He is unbelievably skilled for his size. A player that can shoot, pass, dribble, & defend at an elite level," Erps said.

Erps also agreed with coach Prosser's assessment of Cooks' true value.

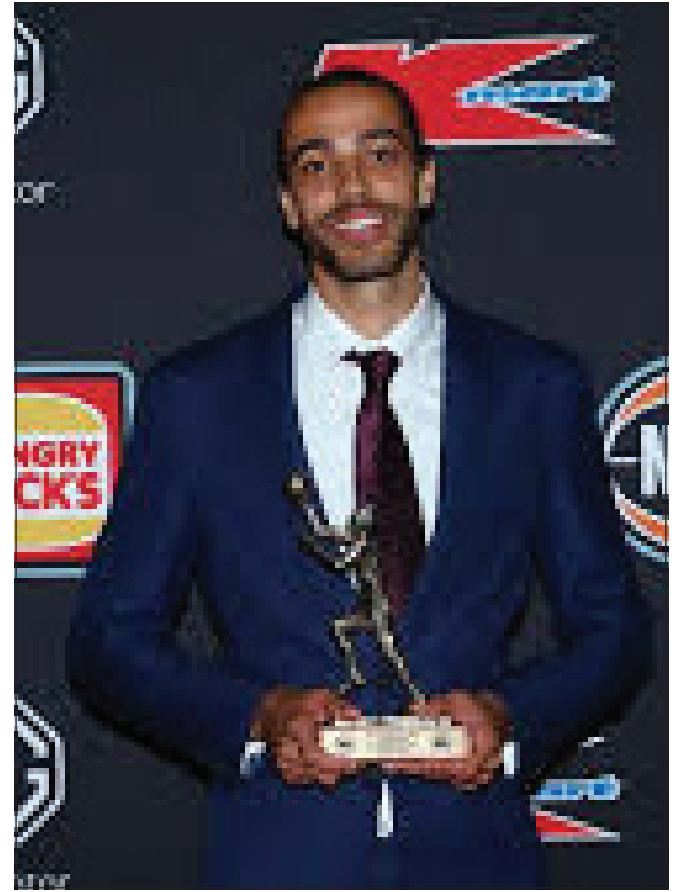
"I think his best quality is his IQ for the game. He is a smart basketball player that knows what to do and when to do it," he said.

Cooks got the call from the Wizards during the Sydney Kings playoff run.

"It was really weird trying to just focus on the Sydney Kings. At the same time it was a dream come true," Cooks said during his media availability last Monday.

Cooks has recorded four rebounds and an assist for the Wizards in 11 minutes of action so far.

The Wizards have seven games remaining before their season concludes at home against the Houston Rockets on April 9th.



Former Winthrop star Xavier Cooks receiving his 2023 NBL Most Valuable Player award

Accolades

- 2x NBL champion (2022, 2023)
- NBL Grand Final MVP (2022)
- NBL Most Valuable Player (2023)
- All-NBL First Team (2023)
- All-NBL Second Team (2022)
- Big South Player of the Year (2018)
- 2x First-team All-Big South (2017, 2018)
- Second-team All-Big South (2016)
- Big South All-Freshman Team (2015)



Winthrop Athletics

Cooks putting his trademark basketball IQ on display with a two handed chest pass back in his Winthrop days

Winthrop Stats

Season	MP	FG%	3P%	FT%	TRB	AST	STL	BLK	PTS
2014-15	25.8	.536	.188	.614	6.1	1.5	0.8	1.5	7.8
2015-16	27.6	.518	.394	.765	7.1	1.8	0.8	1.7	14.7
2016-17	29.0	.488	.349	.698	9.1	2.8	0.9	1.7	16.5
2017-18	29.8	.504	.318	.669	8.8	3.6	1.0	2.1	17.2
Career	28.0	.507	.348	.690	7.7	2.4	0.9	1.7	14.0

sports-reference.com

Sydney Kings Stats

Season	MP	FG%	3P%	FT%	TRB	AST	STL	BLK	PTS
2021	20.9	.534	.500	.625	5.1	2.5	0.5	1.0	10.3
2021-22	27.7	.553	.310	.630	9.8	2.6	0.4	2.1	15.3
2022-23	27.0	.596	.333	.538	7.8	4.2	0.5	0.6	16.2
3 Seasons	26.5	.571	.342	.581	8.3	3.3	0.5	1.3	15.0



James Ross / AAP Photos

Cooks driving toward the basket for the NBL's Sydney Kings

Twenty-seven years of inflation: what it means for students

A look at how tuition has inflated during the last twenty seven years and what it could mean for future students.

Autumn Hawkins
Opinion Editor

In the March 29, 1995 issue of The Johnsonian, the staff broke down that year's tuition and academic fees for students.

In 1995, full time Winthrop students were charged \$3,620 per semester for tuition--approximately \$120 per credit hour. One dollar in 1995 is now worth ninety seven cents more, meaning that this semester of tuition would be equivalent to paying almost eight thousand dollars in 2023. While this is a similar price to what current students are paying, today's tuition is slightly higher than the calculated inflated price. It is unknown, however, whether or

not this price was for in-state residents or those moving from a different part of the country.

In 2023, full time students are paying \$7,653. The projected inflation rate of the 1995 tuition is \$508 cheaper than the price we are currently paying. While this is understandable due to Winthrop's rise in maintenance, it does not bode well for the future Winthrop students in thirty years.

The financial market has crashed five times since 1995, meaning that the value of American currency has shifted significantly. While the overall projected tuition cost and the actual rate students in 2023 are paying are not that far off, the culture surrounding these two de-

acades' tuition is vastly different. Students in 1995 could work part time and pay off this debt relatively easily, modern students are almost required to work at least one job just to make ends meet--let alone pay tuition on top of living costs.

If the past twenty-seven years are indicative of how the next twenty-seven will go, future generations of Winthrop students are in for quite the challenge. Both American and global financial history has been made repeatedly since 1995--from the rise of cryptocurrency to a global pandemic--so it will be surprising to see how much Winthrop's tuition will cost in 2050.

Winthrop has undergone more maintenance in the last few years due to building deterioration and the increasing need to keep technology up to date. With these changes comes a higher tuition for students. As the twenty-first century progresses, what changes will need to be made in order to keep the campus modernized?

With the demolition of Richardson and Wofford, Winthrop will need to build newer residence halls

in order to keep up with the high number of underclassmen that they admit annually. These incoming freshmen and sophomores will most likely need to pay a higher rate in order for the university to offset the construction prices. It is unknown, however, whether these new buildings will cost more to live in when compared to the older dormitories that will still be on campus.

Within the next thirty years, there will undoubtedly be

a rise in student's tuition as Winthrop tries to maintain a profit while the value of money continues to decrease. How this will impact Rock Hills community is yet to be determined, but the on-campus culture could potentially become more capitalistic as students are trying to make extra money in order to pay off their tuition with a national currency that holds little value.

FOR FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATES

School Name	1988-89	1994-95	Rise
The Citadel	\$2,285	\$3,176	\$891
Clemson	2,220	08086	816
Col. of Chas.	2,110	3,060	840
Coastal	1,600	2,710	1,110
Frances Marion	1,400	2,920	1,520
Lander	1,970	3,340	1,370
S.C. State	1,500	2,500	1,000
USC-Aiken	1,600	2,500	900
USC-Spart.	1,600	2,500	900
USC-Cola.	2,228	3,196	968
Winthrop	2,060	3,620	1,560

INFORMATION COURTESY OF THE WINTHROP FACULTY CONFERENCE COMMITTEE, SOURCE: S.C. HIGHER EDUCATIONAL STATISTICAL ABSTRACT 1988 AND 1994-95 FROM THE OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

ANNUAL STUDENT ACADEMIC FEES AT WINTHROP

Category	1988-89	1994-95
Registration	\$10	\$20
Tuition	50	120
Athletic Debt	48	50
Educational and General	1,536	2,604
Information Technology	N/A	200
Student Athletic	270	390
Student Activity	66	98
Health Service	80	138
Total Academic Charges	2,060	3,620

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