



March 2023



A New Day: April 14 Inauguration of Edward Serna Makes Winthrop History; First Alumnus to Assume Presidency

Winthrop will celebrate a new day in its history when [President Edward A. Serna '02](#) is installed as the institution's 12th president during an April 14 investiture ceremony. The special celebratory event will begin at 11 a.m. in the Winthrop Coliseum. The ceremony's keynote speaker is a former colleague of Serna's from the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. Dr. Paul Beran, who was chancellor of the Arkansas institution, will talk on Serna's rise to leadership and his academic philosophy. Following the ceremony, the activities will move to the main campus for a 12:30 p.m. picnic on the Campus Green. The community is encouraged to share a meal and then explore the campus and attend many of the scheduled

activities, including the [SOURCE](#) research conference, a dance showcase, a film viewing and other events. [Read more](#) and visit the [inauguration website](#).



Strategic Planning Process Gets Underway

Work has begun on determining the strategic directions to guide Winthrop's future. The university's partners, [Berkeley Research Group \(BRG\)](#), will be on campus in April to continue their work—presenting, meeting and talking with various stakeholders to help achieve a collaborative and inclusive strategic planning process. Please watch your e-mail and Winthrop's social media channels for details on an alumni-focused virtual town hall that will be scheduled soon. The more stakeholders involved in strategic planning, the better!



AvidXchange CEO and Fintech Expert Michael Praeger to Give April 11 Whitton Series Lecture

An award-winning entrepreneur who founded AvidXchange will speak April 11 at the Whitton Speaker Series. Michael Praeger is the co-founder, chairman, and chief executive officer of AvidXchange, the leading provider of accounts payable and payment automation solutions for the middle market. Since founding the company more than 20 years ago, Praeger has led his company in working with more than 8,000 customers and 825,000 suppliers nationwide. He will speak on “Building a Multi-Billion Dollar Fintech Company in Charlotte” at the free 6:30 p.m. event in Whitton Auditorium. [Register for the event](#) and [learn more](#).



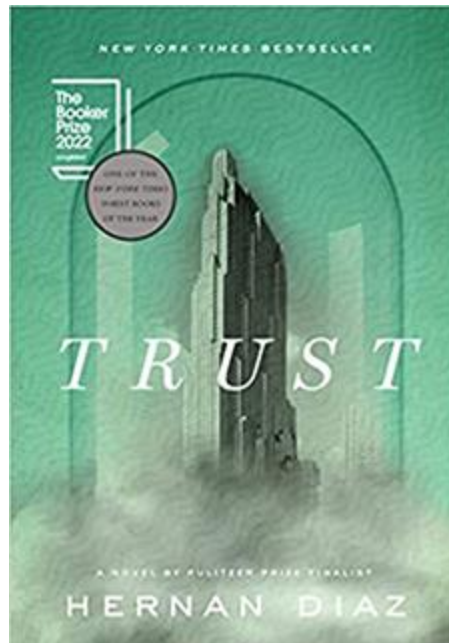
Featured Events: Upstate and Atlanta Alumni Receptions with President Serna

Upstate and Atlanta alumni, come meet President Edward Serna during two upcoming special receptions. Upstate alumni, please save the date of Thursday, May 18, for a meet and greet with Serna at [The Lazy Goat](#) in Greenville. [RSVP](#) by May 12. Atlanta alumni, please save the date of Wednesday, May 24, for a meet and greet on the [18th Floor of Nelson Mullins](#), located at 201 17th Street NW in Atlantic Station. [RSVP](#) by May 19. At both events, Serna will give brief remarks at 6:45 p.m., and hors d'oeuvres, beer and wine will be served. Pictured is a recent Charleston alumni reception with Serna.



A Message from the Alumni Director

Last weekend we had a wonderful visit with our Kershaw alumni at their annual luncheon. It's rewarding to catch up, share all of the great initiatives happening at Winthrop and spend time with our alumni! We'll be hitting the road again in May, coming to the Upstate area of South Carolina as well as Atlanta. Alumni in these areas will have the opportunity to meet President Serna. We hope to see you there! May is shaping up to be a great month with these receptions and with Commencements as we get set to welcome hundreds of new graduates into the alumni family. [Keep reading](#) for details on events coming your way.



"Trust" is Newest Selection for the Virtual Alumni Book Club

Through May 19, the Virtual Alumni Book Club will be reading The New York Times Bestseller "Trust" by Hernan Diaz. The Times said "Trust" was "Intricate, cunning and consistently surprising...Much of the novel's pleasure derives from its unpredictability..." and BuzzFeed called it "A uniquely layered novel...Each page peels back another mystery, making for an utterly riveting read." [Read more](#) about the book. It's free to join the book club, and all you have to do is secure a copy of the book and start reading! [Sign up](#) for the Virtual Alumni Book Club and join the Winthrop community in this shared reading experience.



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