

# Leading Edge

Educate. Collaborate. Innovate.

## *Costner steps up as new interim dean*



Associate Dean Beth Greene Costner has stepped into the role of Interim Dean of the Richard W. Riley College of Education as of January 3. Costner was tapped for the position after Dean Jennie Rakestraw announced her December 2021 retirement.

Provost Adrienne McCormick shared that “Winthrop University is fortunate to have a leader of her caliber ready to step in and ensure the ongoing success of all college operations.” Costner has been instrumental in the work of multiple education grants, programs, and curriculum adjustments. Having arrived at Winthrop in 2001, Costner provides a wealth of institutional knowledge and experience. Starting out in the College of Arts and Sciences, she earned tenure and was promoted to professor in Winthrop’s Department of Mathematics where she also served as chair from 2008-13. Costner also served as assistant and associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences from 2010-15 prior to her moving into the associate dean role in the College of Education in 2016.

Thrilled for this new opportunity, Costner said she will continue to collaborate with the faculty, staff, and students in the College of Education. “Through partnerships that benefit both the college and our community, we will continue to develop and strengthen our commitment to a culture that embraces caring, excellence, diversity, and innovation,” says Costner.

Costner’s career in education began in 1992 as a middle grades mathematics teacher in the Clark County School District in her home state of Kentucky. She earned both a B.S. in mathematics education and M.S. in middle grades mathematics from the University of Kentucky and a Ph.D. in mathematics education from The Ohio State University. Costner’s teaching and research has been focused on the content knowledge development of elementary and middle grades teachers.

While at Winthrop, Costner has secured more than \$3 million in grants, including the Winthrop Initiative for STEM Education, which is a National Science Foundation Robert Noyce Scholarship project that supports the recruitment, retention, and development of science and mathematics teachers.

In addition to efforts directed toward teacher development, Costner has led a number of initiatives related to student services, assessment, and accreditation. In the area of accreditation, she served as the lead author on the most recent review of the educator preparation programs at Winthrop that resulted in reaccreditation in 2020 with no areas for improvement.

As a national search is underway for a new dean, Costner will continue to provide steady leadership in our college. Congratulations to Dr. Costner on her new role!

# *Williams Literacy Collaborative*



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*We are excited to see our vision to foster literacy learning and creativity through a collaborative, community-oriented project such as this. I am proud of our faculty who had the vision and the Williams family for making the dream come true.*

*-- Jennie Rakestraw, Dean Emeritus*

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The Williams Family Multicultural Children's Literacy Collaborative, funded by Gary and Peggy Williams, will offer a unique opportunity to promote literacy to preK-12 students from our diverse community. Directors Dr. Erin Hamel and Dr. Bettie Parsons Barger worked to bring this innovative vision to life for a fall 2021 launch. Under the direction of Assistant Professor Mikale Kwiatkowski, design students in the College of Visual and Performing Arts designed an inspirational space that will encourage, promote, and spark a love for literacy.

Partnering with the Rock Hill School District and other community agencies, the Collaborative will offer a variety of literacy engagements for children and families throughout the year. Professional authors and storytellers will host interactive workshops to enhance and extend children's love and craft of language and literacy. A multicultural children's library will offer students opportunities to read and use as inspiration for bookmaking, digital literacy projects, and storytelling dramatizations. The Collaborative will extend support to the participants in the Macfeat Summer Literacy Camp for Emergent Bilinguals, continuing the initial support from the Williams family.

Additionally, the Richard W. Riley College of Education will collaborate with units across the Winthrop campus, including Dacus Library, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Visual and Performing Arts, the College of Education's Instructional Technology Center, and Macfeat Early Childhood Laboratory School. The Collaborative will function as a demonstration site for literacy instructional strategies such as read alouds, partner reading, shared reading, guided writing, and mini-writing lessons.

The Williams Family Multicultural Literacy Collaborative will offer the space and resources to explore and celebrate literacy experiences that honor ethnic, cultural, and social diversity. Through the Collaborative, students will enjoy developing as readers and writers and create new ways to explore and apply their literacy skills. Many thanks to Gary and Peggy Williams, and their daughter Alice Davis, for enabling such an exciting opportunity for our Winthrop community and beyond.

# Student Spotlight

## Jasmine Moyd



If you have been part of the College of Education in the last four years, there is a good chance you already know Jasmine Moyd. Jasmine is a current student who has become well recognized for her campus involvement, bright smile, and positive attitude.

A South Carolina native, Jasmine served as an Orientation Leader for two years before becoming a Student Orientation Coordinator with the Office of New Student and Family Programs. She works with the office to strategically plan each Orientation session. However, Orientation events are not the only place you will find Jasmine. She is also an ambassador for Education Core and the Educational Studies program and often assists with campus recruitment events like the College of Education Open House. Jasmine has even served as the College of Education's representative for the Council of Student Leaders.

In her time at Winthrop, Jasmine has become both a WISE scholar and a McNair scholar. The [Winthrop Initiative for STEM Educators](#) (WISE) Scholar program is designed to encourage talented STEM students to pursue teacher certification. The [McNair Scholars program](#) serves outstanding first-generation college students either from low-income families or underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in graduate education and prepares these students for success in Ph.D. programs. Jasmine is also a Teaching Fellow in the [South Carolina Teaching Fellows Program](#) where she gains professional development opportunities during summer months, gets involved with communities and businesses throughout the state, and can receive yearly scholarships as she works toward her teacher certification.

Last summer, Jasmine received first place in the Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel's Student Support Services/McNair Scholars Research Conference under the category of Education. Mentored by Dr. Kelly Costner, Jasmine gave an oral presentation titled STEM Educator Experiences During the Pandemic: Teacher Preparation and Teacher Effectiveness in the use of Technology for Instruction. It details an investigation of teacher responses to and experiences during the pandemic to determine whether there is a relationship between STEM teachers' preparation for and effectiveness in using technology in virtual classroom environments. You can watch her conference presentation [here](#).

Jasmine plans to graduate this May with her B.A. in mathematics and a minor in educational studies and will start her M.A.T. this summer in the Secondary Mathematics program. Eventually, maybe after teaching a few years of high school math, Jasmine would like to return to school to earn her Ph.D.

Jasmine is a shining example of just what our students can do - anything!

# *Faculty Spotlight*

Jacob Gdovin

Jacob Gdovin, Ph.D., joined Winthrop in August 2020 as a member of the Physical Education, Sport, & Human Performance Department. Dr. Gdovin immediately became a contributing member of the exercise science faculty and quickly connected with colleagues, staff, and students. Dr. Gdovin is a gifted teacher and currently teaches Intro to Exercise Science, Biomechanics, and other courses related to research and writing. Biomechanics is Dr. Gdovin's area of expertise; students love the content knowledge he brings to the course.



Dr. Gdovin received his undergraduate degree in sports medicine (Mercyhurst University, 2011), a graduate degree in organizational leadership (Mercyhurst University, 2013), a graduate degree in exercise science (Mercyhurst University, 2014), and a doctorate in health and kinesiology with an emphasis in biomechanics (The University of Mississippi, 2017). Prior to arriving at Winthrop University in the fall of 2020 as an assistant professor of exercise science, Dr. Gdovin was an assistant professor of kinesiology at Missouri State University from 2017-2020. His research interests include sports biomechanics, training load analysis, and biomechanical assessments of strength and conditioning exercises.

# *And the award goes to...*



Left to right: Jennie Rakestraw, Dean Emeritus; Kavin Ming, Chair of Curriculum and Pedagogy; Beth Costner, Interim Dean; Crystal Glover, Early Childhood Education Program Director; and Adrienne McCormick, Provost and Executive VP for Academic Affairs

Congratulations to Dr. Crystal Glover '97, '99 for being named the Bank of America Endowed Professor within the Richard W. Riley College of Education! Dr. Glover joined Winthrop University in 2014 and was selected as the university's Outstanding Junior Professor in 2020.

Dr. Glover's primary goal for the Bank of America professorship is to develop a comprehensive, integrated, instructional curriculum that celebrates the humanity, identities, lived experiences, and joy of Black, indigenous, children of color and their families.

"I aim to counter one-dimensional perspectives of the Black experience that couch Blackness in stories defined by pain, suffering/trauma and oppression," Glover said. "In contrast, the integrated early childhood curriculum will showcase the joy that Blacks have experienced in every point in history."

# *A Makeover for the HDFS Classroom*

The Human Development and Family Studies classroom in 305 Withers has had a facelift! Unused wall cabinets were removed, providing more space for students while also increasing the max capacity for the space. The old tile flooring was removed and new carpet tiles were installed to match the other classrooms in Withers. On top of that, 305 received a fresh coat of paint and brand new classroom furniture. Refurbished HVAC units were also installed.


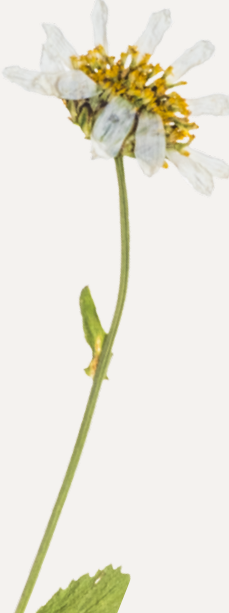




# *Good News!*

## **\$2.8 Million Secured with Recent Grant**

Last fall, the Richard W. Riley College of Education secured a large grant related to multilingual learners. The college received close to \$2.8 million through a U.S. Department of Education grant entitled SC PALMETTO (SC Partners Advocating for Learners who are Multilingual through Education That Targets Opportunity) to provide professional development to four school districts to help those districts meet the needs of their diverse population of English-learning students and families. The grant will also provide family education programs that promote college and career success as well as family access to and preparation in promoting early literacy.



*"To have another language is to  
possess a second soul."  
-- Charlemagne*

The Richard W. Riley College of Education prides itself on the accomplishments of our alumni and their contributions to their communities. As a small “thank you,” we are sending magnets to our alumni. Show your Winthrop pride in your classroom, your office or even at home on your fridge! To receive your magnet, provide your mailing address at [https://bit.ly/COE Alumni](https://bit.ly/COE_Alumni).



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*Richard W. Riley  
College of Education*