

# STAFF stuff

Volume 7 Issue 1  
August 2020

## Staying Connected

Join the Staff Conference Facebook group to learn about events in between newsletters and to connect with other Winthrop staff members!



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# Meet the new Staff Assembly Chair



Jayme Charles

*administrative coordinator*

*Computing & Information Technology*

There are a few things I've had a bit of an obsession with over the years: Pinterest, owls, Netflix documentaries, and college. In 2013, I stepped on my first college campus and fell in love with higher ed. After graduating from Queens University of Charlotte with my B.A. in communication, I wasn't ready to leave university life. I enrolled in my master's program at Queens and a few months after my undergraduate graduation, I started my first "grown up" job at Winthrop.

While I have only been an employee at Winthrop for three years, I've had a connection to the campus for a bit longer. During my college search in high school, I visited Winthrop and considered the IMC program. Then, in my sophomore year of college, I started dating a long-term friend who attended Winthrop, and I married him four years later. So I guess you can say I married into the Winthrop family!

The past few years have been full of change. I started my career at Winthrop as the administrative specialist for the Department of World Languages and Cultures in August 2017. I married Daniel '16, '18 in October of 2018, bought a house in February of 2019, moved to my current position as administrative coordinator for Computing & Information Technology that April, and graduated with my master's in May 2019. Oh, and I've also moved four times in three years... Whew!

In spite of so much change, Winthrop has been one of the few constants. Whether I'm in Kinard or Tillman, I still take a moment on the way to my office every day to look around at our beautiful campus and think about how thankful I am to work with such wonderful people. I have truly made some of the best friendships of my life here, and as the new Chair of Staff Assembly, I am excited to give back to the staff some of the support and appreciation the Winthrop community has shown me.

## Finding Big Stuff



Can you find Big Stuff? Each issue of Staff Stuff has the illustration to the left of our beloved mascot, Big Stuff, hidden somewhere throughout the pages. If you find Big Stuff, send an e-mail to [staffstuff@winthrop.edu](mailto:staffstuff@winthrop.edu) and tell us where he is. Those who find Big Stuff will be entered into a drawing to win a prize. Congratulations to last month's winner:

Sheryl Jordan, *library specialist, Ida Jane Dacus Library.*

# 2020-2021

## Staff Assembly Representatives

Debbie Casperson, *accounting technician, Cashiers Office*

Jayme Charles, *administrative coordinator, Computing & Information Technology*

Holly Cook, *designer, University Communications & Marketing*

Debbie Garrick, *development officer, University Advancement*

Katie Gawronski, *financial aid counselor, Office of Financial Aid*

April Hershey, *assistant to the dean, Graduate School*

Chris Johnson, *sustainability coordinator, Facilities Management*

John Kroft, *readmission coordinator, Records & Registration*

Shea Maple, *director of athletic partnerships and giving, Athletics*

Jessica Martin, *residential learning coordinator, Residence Life*

Claire Mooney-Melvin, *director of academic student services, Athletics*

Tanya Pettus, *human resources assistant, Human Resources*

Leah Simmonds, *financial analyst, College of Arts & Sciences*

Jill Simpson, *family nurse practitioner, Health Services*

## Staff Assembly

The staff assembly serves as an advisory group that provides staff with a forum for communication and community and provides a voice in matters of importance and concern to staff. The group offers opportunities for staff to support one another, participate as a group in community outreach and engagement, and make recommendations to the university's president and the administration in support of staff needs and the university's mission.

Please e-mail [staffassembly@winthrop.edu](mailto:staffassembly@winthrop.edu) with any questions or suggestions you may have. If you would prefer the option of contacting the assembly anonymously, please complete the [online staff feedback form](#) via a non-Winthrop computer.



# STAFF MEMBER of the month



Maria Arrington-Ferguson,  
*director of technology services, Computing & Information  
Technology*

**How many years have you been at Winthrop?**

I have been at Winthrop since 2017, so three years.

**What is your favorite part of Winthrop?**

Winthrop feels like a family — the pluses and minuses and all. I love all the variety.

**What do you do in your spare time? Hobbies?**

I paint, and I'm a Trekkie. I don't have much free time left after that! I used to garden, but not since I've lived in an HOA!

**If you had to tell an incoming student one thing about Winthrop, what would it be?**

It's not that stressful. When I see new students they always seem so tense, but I want to tell them to sit back and enjoy the ride. Don't go crazy! But you're only 18-, 19-, 20-years-old once. Enjoy it. Don't be in such a hurry to grow up.

**What makes Winthrop special to you?**

My children. My son graduated from here, and my daughter is coming this fall. Winthrop helps me feel proud of their success, and I couldn't ask for more.

**What drives you to make such a difference?**

My parents raised me to give my all in everything I do. I want to give a full day's work for a full day's pay! I strive for excellence in everything, and I hope I've passed that on to my children as well.

# New Hires

Welcome to the newest members of our Winthrop family:

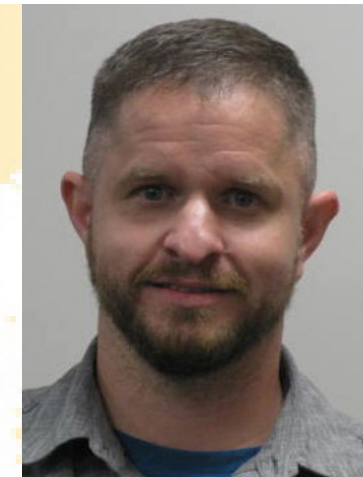
Katherine Knop, *LEAP coordinator, University College*

Ashley Ravenell, *career consultant, Center for Career & Civic Engagement*

Cristy Truesdale, *NetSERVE mentoring & induction specialist, Rex Institute for Educational Renewal & Partnerships*

Donna Webster, *accounts receivable technician, Student Financial Services*

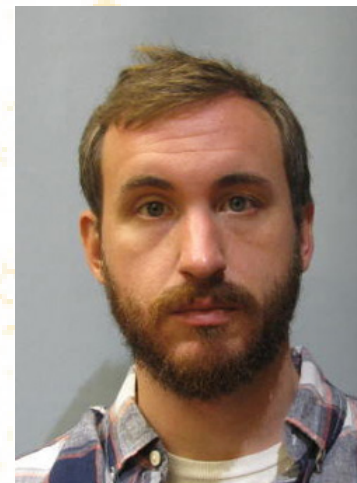
# SMOOTH Nominees



Brandon Braswell  
*technology services technician  
Computing & Information  
Technology*



Jackie Concodora  
*director  
Health Services*



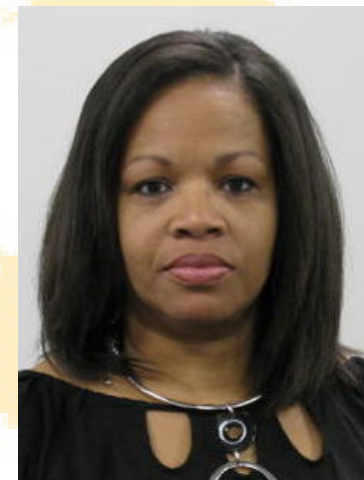
Andrew Davis  
*lab technician  
Fine Arts*



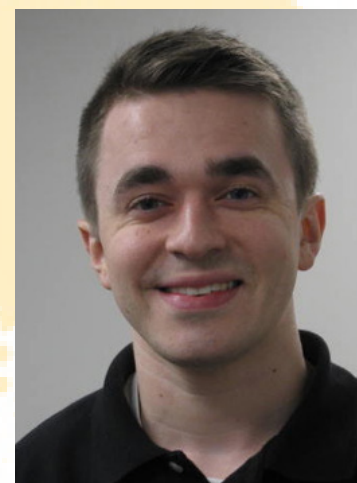
Phillip Hays  
*interlibrary loan librarian  
Ida Jane Dacus Library*



Tadean Page  
*community & outreach  
coordinator  
Office of Admissions*



Tracy Smith  
*business operations manager  
Athletics*



Michael Szeman  
*cultural events & degree  
progress coordinator  
Records & Registration*



Elizabeth Tate  
*counselor  
Counseling Services*



Jessica Van Cleave  
*digital content specialist  
Office of Admissions*



# Who are WU?

## The International Center

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the International Center's staff has been busier than ever. Behind the scenes, they have been working diligently to monitor COVID-19 around the world, including tracking relevant travel restrictions and interruptions of international services needed by Winthrop students. Read on to meet the staff, learn more about the work they have been involved in since spring, and what to expect as we look towards fall.

### Meet the Staff



#### **Rae Glover**, *program assistant*

Rae started working at Winthrop in the College of Education in 2013, and then moved to the Computing & Information Technology department in 2014. She worked as the IT administrative coordinator for almost five years before accepting a job in the private sector. By 2020, however, Rae was ready to come back home to Winthrop, and with great excitement, accepted her position as program assistant for the International Center. She loves working with the students and helping them with the various administrative tasks that are associated with studying outside of one's home country. Outside of work, Rae loves reading, hanging out with her cat, hiking, and knitting.

#### **LeAnn Lowery**, *assistant director*

In 2011, LeAnn left her teaching position at UNC-Charlotte's English Language Training Institute to be the international student tutor and global engagement coordinator for Winthrop's University College. She loves working with international students, as well as domestic students who are interested in languages and culture. Last fall, she became the assistant director of the International Center. When not working, she enjoys kayaking, traveling, and spending time with friends and family.

#### **Alexa Maddox**, *study abroad coordinator*

As Winthrop's study abroad coordinator, Alexa gets to work with adventurous students who travel the world while earning credit toward their degrees. She especially enjoys helping Winthrop's diverse students learn about themselves and the world through the entire experience of planning for study abroad and returning to Winthrop. She has a B.A. in English from the University of South Carolina, and an M.A. from Appalachian State University. She spent her junior year at USC studying abroad at the University of Kent in England, and eventually discovered the international education field during graduate school. Alexa most recently traveled abroad to Canada, but hopes to visit family and explore more of India when travel is safe again. Coordinating study abroad opportunities during a global pandemic is a challenge, but it's also an opportunity to expand access to international education opportunities through virtual exchanges, courses, and programming that she's eager to share with Winthrop students, faculty, and staff.

#### **Leigh Poole**, *director*

Dr. Leigh Poole joined the Winthrop community in August 2013 as the director of the International Center and assistant professor for University College. She is responsible for leading campus-wide internationalization as well as overseeing study abroad and international student/immigration services for Winthrop. She teaches ACAD, HMXP, Introduction to Study Abroad (INGS), and Global Leadership at Winthrop. Additionally, she studied abroad in the Dominican Republic and Mexico, and has enjoyed traveling to more than 20 countries in Europe, Asia, and South America. Beyond seeing the world, her hobbies include reading, watching movies, photography, and spending time with family and friends.

### Recent Highlights



- When study abroad trips needed to be cancelled due to the pandemic, International Center staff members provided assistance to study abroad students with the logistics of traveling home, coordinated the academic needs of students unable to complete their coursework overseas, and negotiated refunds from both semester-long study abroad partners and short-term faculty-led program partners.
- Staff have served as liaisons with the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in addition to working with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Student Exchange Visitor Program to keep on top of changes.
- Staff have hosted virtual town halls, Q&A sessions, and informational sessions with study abroad students, international students, and on-campus partners to keep everyone in the loop on immigration and COVID-19 issues such as access to embassies, student visas, travel restrictions, and more.
- Staff have continued to support Winthrop's international community by providing non-resident taxation support to international students abroad; responding to the immigration needs and applications of current and new full-time international faculty and staff; and assisting international students as they plan to return to campus with international travel, quarantine, housing, health and safety, immigration matters, visa issuance, academic support, and more.
- Staff have been managing and coordinating the University's recertification and redesignation processes to retain the ability to host our international student population.

### Fall 2020



The International Center is extremely grateful to the innumerable staff colleagues across campus who have supported both international and study abroad students during these turbulent times. In addition to the existing retention efforts, the fall 2020 semester will also include:

- Virtual study abroad courses for students whose fall 2020 programs were suspended
- Immigration, academic, and personal support for Winthrop's international students
- A virtual study abroad fair that includes global options for all Winthrop students
- Virtual global engagement through Casual Fridays and the Global Friends Conversation Partner Program
- International Education Week
- So much more!

Stay tuned to learn more about what the International Center has planned!



# Milestones



Brittany Cromedy, *benefits administrator, Human Resources*, welcomed baby boy Jaxson Rice on March 18. Congratulations!



Chris O'Neill, *technical director and facilities manager, Department of Music*, had his short film, "Those Lonely Minutes," chosen as a finalist for the Micropolitan Film Festival!

- Without traditional sports being played this year, staff members have branched out and discovered some new obscure favorites. The American Cornhole League Pro Qualifier Invitational took place right here in Rock Hill back in May, and they're back this week for the ACL World Championship! If cornhole isn't for you, staff members also recommended the Marble Race Tournament and the World Axe Throwing Championship, both available on YouTube.

Some staff members brought their own fun, creative cloth face masks to help give out supplies to departments across campus on July 1.



Jessica Martin, *residential learning coordinator, Residence Life*.



Steven Moseley, *environmental health manager, Risk Management*.

# COVID-19 Creativity

Despite the pandemic, Winthrop staff have managed to find creative ways to enjoy their time this summer with new hobbies, untraditional sporting events, and socially-distanced family outings!



Leah Simmonds, *financial analyst, College of Arts & Sciences*, and her family purchased the annual South Carolina State Park Pass with the goal to visit all 47 state parks. The idea was prompted by her son, Nolan, wanting to learn to fish, and turned into a great way for the family to explore their new home state and enjoy the outdoors without people or masks. They've visited four parks so far, and Nolan caught his first fish!



Tim Drueke, *assistant vice president, Academic Affairs*.



Jenn Hester, *residential learning coordinator, Residence Life*.



Eduardo Prieto, *vice president, Access & Enrollment Management*.

Story or content ideas? Contact a member of the Media & Communications Committee:

Kara Cauthen, Jayme Charles, Maria D'Agostino, Kaye Hayes, Shea Maple, Kat Wilson.