



## **2024 Alumni Distinguished Service Award Erin Duffy Patel, Classes of 2007 & 2009**

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The Alumni Distinguished Service Award recognizes a Winthrop alumna/us who significantly contributes to the quality of life in their community, the development of overall values and morals within others and serves as an outstanding citizen. Distinguished service may have been rendered with one's community, church, charity, family and school on a national, state or local level. The recipient shall be a dedicated alumna/us who supports the growth and development of Winthrop through service to and/or support of established programs and objectives.

The 2024 Alumni Distinguished Service Award recipient is Mrs. Erin Duffy Patel, Classes of 2007 and 2009.

Mrs. Patel earned a Bachelor of Science in business administration from Winthrop in 2007 and a Master of Business Administration from Winthrop in 2009. She is currently working on her Doctorate in Business Administration at West Virginia University with an anticipated graduation date of 2027.

With over 14 years of experience in consumer product goods, Mrs. Patel has served as director of category management at Anheuser-Busch and senior category manager at Kimberly-Clark, Conagra, Clorox and Chobani.

Mrs. Patel's focus of service is increasing diversity in business and education on data analytics practices. She has served as an active member and held various leadership roles on numerous non-profit boards, including the Center for Prevention Services (seven years), Promises Resource Network (one year) and NextUp Carolinas (12+ years). She is a transformative board member who brings new ways of analytical thinking and industry tools to non-profit spaces.

She is an adjunct instructor in data analytics and marketing for Winthrop University's College of Business and Technology, where she also serves as an active alumna. She partners with Winthrop faculty and local non-profits to better serve Winthrop students. In 2014 she led "Retail Adventures" with NextUp Carolinas, where students learned to network, meet with senior leaders, functional managers and HR representatives with companies across the Carolinas who specialize in consumer product goods and retailing. After initially launching the program at the University of North Carolina Charlotte in 2013, Mrs. Patel changed the focus school to Winthrop. Since then, 20-30 Winthrop students annually participate in the program and companies such as Food Lion, Lowes Home Improvement, Campbells, Kraft-Heinz, Mondelez and many more are participants. Since Mrs. Patel's involvement in 2014, the program has impacted approximately 200 Winthrop College of Business and Technology students.

Planning and moderating panels for Winthrop students is a passion. In April 2024, she hosted a three-person panel with Winthrop, Lowes Home Improvement and Microsoft on how to make "Effective Decisions with AI as a Co-Pilot."



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In March of 2025, she will host a panel of diverse leaders to speak about removing data bias to make better decisions through mindfulness practice. Since 2014, she has served as a personal mentor to dozens of Winthrop marketing and data analytics students.

In 2023, Mrs. Patel and her husband, Arpit, Class of 2007, made a challenge gift for Winthrop's Bleed Garnet, Give Gold Day of Giving. If Winthrop reached 700 donors during Day of Giving, their challenge gift would unlock an additional \$20,000 for Winthrop. The Patels were highlighted in the winter 2024 Winthrop Magazine for their support and spoke about the impact Winthrop has had on their lives.

Mrs. Patel lives in Indian Land with her husband, Arpit, and two sons, Neil and Liam.