



**WINTER PARK PUBLISHING COMPANY TRANSFERS
OWNERSHIP OF WINTER PARK INSTITUTE;
REMAINS COMMITTED TO ITS SUCCESS**

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Winter Park Publishing Company (WPPC), publisher of the acclaimed *Winter Park Magazine*, announced today that it is transferring ownership of the Winter Park Institute (WPI) to Randall B. Robertson, who will serve as its owner and executive director, effective July 1, 2021.

WPI, the beloved speaker series that brought numerous celebrities to Winter Park, was created in 2007 by Rollins College under the leadership of former President Lewis Duncan, trustee Allan E. Keen and Executive Director Gail Sinclair.

Past speakers have included, among many others, Maya Angelou, Ken Burns, Jules Feiffer, Jane Goodall, Sir Paul McCartney, David McCullough, Jane Pauley, Itzhak Perlman, Julian Bond, Salman Rushdie, Paul Simon, Gloria Steinem and a prominent local resident – two-term U.S. poet laureate Billy Collins.

Rollins ceased operation of the Institute last year, when the COVID-19 pandemic indefinitely halted the possibility of live events.

WPPC, because of its ownership of *Winter Park Magazine*, received permission to take over the institute's operation during the lockdown period so that the program could be kept alive as a valuable community asset.

During 2020, WPPC conducted two virtual events under the WPI umbrella with the idea of finding community partners as the pandemic receded and live events could eventually return.

At the top of WPPC's list of potential WPI suitors was Robertson, who for the past 12 years has operated GladdeningLight, a Winter Park-based nonprofit sponsoring an annual symposium that draws highly regarded speakers and attracts attendees to Winter Park from all over the U.S.

"The more I talked with Mr. Robertson, the more it became obvious that to ensure the continuance of WPI in a way that honors its tradition and delivers what the residents of Winter Park expect, then he should be the person to run it," says Randy Noles, CEO of WPPC and publisher of *Winter Park Magazine*. "Happily for everyone, he was at once committed and enthusiastic."

Robertson says he was a longtime fan of WPI because it provided a forum for citizens "to hear from thought leaders in the public square, challenging us to stretch our thinking."

Adds Robertson: "We want to continue attracting visionaries and extraordinary people from the arts and humanities, the sciences and literature to advance public themes in education, society, the economy and politics."

WPPC will remain supportive of WPI – which is being reorganized as a nonprofit organization – by serving as a print media sponsor while Noles, representing WPPC, will sit on WPI's newly configured board of trustees.

Robertson is an Omicron Delta Kappa graduate of Rhodes College in Memphis and forged his career prior to GladdeningLight in corporate sports marketing for Fortune 100 companies. He and his wife Pat, who is a lifelong Winter Park resident, live near Rollins on College Point.

Robertson – who was a WPI featured speaker in 2012 -- said that the new Winter Park Library & Events Center will be WPI's official home and that most of its events will be in one of the venues at the complex, designed by London architect Sir David Adjaye. "The Institute represents a beautiful opportunity to showcase Winter Park to the world," adds Robertson.

Robertson says he intends to devote his full energies to building the Institute. He adds that he hopes to announce several WPI events for the spring of 2022 and a full slate of events for the 2022-23 season.