



MOVING FORWARD | THE DEAN'S VIEW



Strengthening Education Together

New energy and fresh thinking characterize the beginning of the fall semester, and it is palpable in Simmons. Our faculty and students are ready to delve into important questions, engage in meaningful inquiry, and work collaboratively to solve challenges.

With this kind of enthusiasm, we recently celebrated the first year of a three-year planning grant to develop an innovative **PreK-8 STEM-focused school** in West Dallas with our partners, Toyota USA, and the Dallas Independent School District.

Our goal is to improve opportunities and resources for families and students with a school concept that is industry informed and that exemplifies best practices in STEM education. We also are doing the research and evaluation to develop a model of partnership practices and impacts that can be adapted for other settings.

Equally important is that we are working with West Dallas community members who provide input and insight into the design of all aspects of the school. They are our fourth partner and truly shape the project.

Thanks to a \$2 million grant from Toyota USA Foundation, we are moving ahead into our second and third year of planning for the school and model development.

Of course, this is one accomplishment of many at the Simmons School. For more, I encourage you to read below about our exciting work.



Leon Simmons Endowed Dean

INNOVATE

Simmons, Dallas ISD and Toyota Complete First Year Work on STEM School

Toyota, Dallas Independent School District, and SMU Simmons School of Education and Human Development formed a **partnership** one year ago to develop a new STEM-focused school in West Dallas. This past year, the partnership successfully laid the groundwork for collaboration and planning.

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A Grand Prize Win for Simmons and Partners in \$7M Adult Literacy XPRIZE

The SMU and Literacy Instruction for Texas (LIFT) team, **PeopleForWords**, won a **grand prize** in the \$7 million Barbara Bush Foundation Adult Literacy **XPRIZE** presented by Dollar General Literacy Foundation. PeopleForWords tied with Learning Upgrade from San Diego, CA and divided the grand prize purse. The XPRIZE is a global competition that challenged teams to develop mobile applications to increase literacy skills in adult learners.

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Doris Luft Baker Receives Fulbright to Assess Beginning Readers in Chile

Associate Professor Doris Luft Baker, director of the school's Master of Bilingual Education program, and co-director of the Ph.D. program, has been selected as a Fulbright U.S. Scholar to conduct research in Chile.

She will set up a norming study to provide researchers and practitioners with a better understanding of reading trajectories in beginning reading.

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White House Recognizes Walkington with Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers

Candace Walkington, associate professor in Teaching and Learning, is a recipient of the **Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers** (PECASE). Announced by the White House, the award is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government to outstanding scientists and engineers who are beginning their independent research careers and who show exceptional promise for leadership in science and technology.

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Examining Student Debt-to-Income Ratios In Texas Public Universities

Dominique Baker, assistant professor of Education Policy and Leadership, has done the first study looking at the debt-to-income ratio for Texas public university graduates. Her research, published in **AERA Open**, covered students who started college between 2004 and 2008.

College students with a bachelor's degree had, on average, student loan debts that equaled 74 percent of what they earned in their first-year wages.

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Spotlight on Simmons Executive Board's Kim Garrett

Kim Garrett serves on the Simmons School Executive Board and SMU's Campaign Steering Committee.



She retired from Facebook at the age of 40 after a four-year tenure as Director of National Sales, central region. In this career-changing role, she opened the central region in 2007 and helped FB define its social strategies and build brand presence.

Garrett is a sports enthusiast, yoga student, and foodie. She loves travel, adventure and the wonder of motherhood. She is married and has two boys – one of whom is a freshman at SMU.

ENGAGE



Petrosino and Jacobbe Join Simmons Faculty and Administration

The Simmons School welcomes two new faculty members and administrators, Anthony Petrosino, Professor and Associate Dean for Research and Outreach, and Tim Jacobbe, Professor and Chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning.

Petrosino served most recently as an associate professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Texas at Austin, where he co-founded the nationally recognized **UTeach** program for teacher preparation in STEM.

Jacobbe, formerly an associate professor at the University of Florida's College of Education, focuses his research on statistics and mathematics education. The American Statistical Association named him a Fellow for outstanding

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NSF Awards \$2.3M Grant to Study Equity and Access Rubrics in Mathematics Instruction

Associate Professor Annie Wilhelm and fellow researchers from North Carolina State received a \$2.3 million grant from the National Science Foundation to conduct a four-year study of elementary and middle school mathematics instructional practices to respond to the growing needs of those who historically have been underserved in mathematics classes.

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SMU Simmons, Lyle, and Guildhall Receive \$1.5M NSF Grant to Study Computational Thinking through Gaming

Simmons Professor Leanne Ketterlin Geller joins SMU Lyle School of Engineering's Associate Professor Eric Larson and Assistant Professor Corey Clark, also deputy director of research at Guildhall, to research teaching computer science and computational thinking through the popular video game, Minecraft.

With a \$1.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation, they will examine the fields of game design, human-computer interaction, machine learning, curriculum design, and education assessment by integrating STEM+C (computing) based curriculum directly into Minecraft.

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2019 AERA Conference Presents Faculty with Awards

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) recognized Simmons faculty members Doris Luft Baker, Annie Wilhelm, and Dominique Baker with awards for contributions to their fields.

Luft Baker and Wilhelm received AERA Special Interest Group (SIG) awards. Dominique Baker was chosen as an AERA Outstanding Reviewer 2018, and also awarded a \$25,000 grant to look at policies regarding "excess semester credit hours."

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Simmons Welcomes Alumni and Hosts LG Pinkston HS Band for Homecoming

Regina Taylor '81, a Meadows School alumna and Golden Globe winner, is this year's Homecoming Parade grand marshal. To honor her and her West Dallas high school, L.G. Pinkston, Simmons is hosting the high school band, which will march along with her. **Come home** and join the fun, November 9.

PonyPower

Strengthening the Stampede

When you demonstrate your commitment to SMU's three-year stampede to strengthen every area of the University, you enable flexible support for Simmons' greatest needs and emerging opportunities. You make an immediate impact on everything we do to shape world changers.

Join the PonyPower stampede today and see how we put generosity to work at smu.edu/give/ponypower.



Onward. Upward. Always.

The Simmons School of Education and Human Development is changing minds – and challenging the way we think. As a transformative leader, our commitment to rigorous, research-driven programs promotes evidence-based, effective practices and policy. Fresh thinking and breakthrough research will drive meaningful change in the fields of education and human development.

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