Honoring Those Who Inspire

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Co-Chairs Nima Baha ‘02, ‘05 and Erik Nikravan ‘06 are co-chairs of the new Young Leaders in Education Council.

As Council leaders, their mission is to organize young alumni and community members to meet and discuss educational issues and intellectually contribute to school initiatives.

The first event was April 15, when a group gathered to meet David J. Chard, the school’s Leon Simmons Endowed Dean. For more information, contact Patricia Addington, Director of Development, paddington@smu.edu.

To make a gift to the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development, please call Patricia Addington, Director of Development, at 214-668-4844 or email simmonsgive@smu.edu.

Donors Contribute to New Hall

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Bush Institute Spotlights Education

Education research and reform took a leap this spring with the arrival of the George W. Bush Institute at SMU.

Partnering with the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development, the Bush Institute sponsored its first conferences to examine issues important to the former President and First Lady, including education leadership and the education of women and girls in Afghanistan.

In welcoming audiences and participants to the conferences held on campus, George W. Bush explained the Institute’s mission to conduct independent research and then to transform the results into action. The Institute, which will be part of the Bush Presidential Center, will focus on education policy, economic growth, global health and human freedom.

During the first conference, March 19, Bush discussed his passion for education reform, which took shape as policy when he served as Texas governor and evolved into the No Child Left Behind Act early in his presidency.

Joining him was James B. Hunt, Jr., former governor of North Carolina, who gave the keynote address on education leadership. Hunt chairs the board of the James B. Hunt Jr. Institute for Educational Policy and Leadership at the University of North Carolina.

Effective principals are the key to attracting the best teachers to low performing schools, he said. When surveyed by the Hunt Institute, teachers said, “We will go and teach under good principals and we’ll stay there.”

David J. Chard, the Leon Simmons Endowed Dean of the Simmons School, opened a discussion with Hunt and the Institute’s two Fellows in Education Policy, James Guthrie and Sandy Kress. Guthrie holds a concurrent appointment with the Institute and SMU, serving as a senior fellow with the Bush Institute and as Professor of Education Policy and Leadership in the Simmons School. Kress is an attorney specializing in public law and policy. They identified steps for creating better school leaders, including: widen the talent pool, replace current professional preparation, and human freedom.

Education leadership topped the agenda of the first Bush Institute symposium March 19. The conference was co-sponsored by the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development.
The Simmons Luminary Award

In this issue, we highlight two recent events that are important to the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development. We've partnered with the newly launched George W. Bush Institute, the research and policy arm of the Bush Presidential Center. Consequently, we’re working with the Institute’s Senior Fellow in Education Policy, James Kvaerner, who also serves as Professor of Education Policy and Leadership on our faculty.

Margaret Spellings

Margaret Spellings, former U.S. Secretary of Education, implemented the No Child Left Behind Act. Because of her, setting high standards and measurable goals for learning are part of determining education outcomes. She continues to push for strong accountability methods to close the achievement gap.

Geraldine “Tincy” Miller ’56

Geraldine “Tincy” Miller ’56 is a statewide advocate for students with reading disorders. As an elected member of the Texas State Board of Education and also as a reading and academic language therapist, she champions the use of scientifically based instructional practices for students with a range of reading difficulties.

Terry Flowers

Terry Flowers is the executive director and headmaster of the St. Philip’s School in Dallas, where he instills the values of learning and self-empowerment to all students. His strategies are so effective that nearly all of his elementary school students graduate from high school. In addition, 88 percent of them go on to higher education.

To learn more about the Simmons Luminary Award, visit smu.edu/education.

On the Road to Reform

Former U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings (left) joins Annette Caldwell Simmons ’57, Geraldine “Tincy” Miller ’56 and Terry Flowers at the Simmons Luminary Award dinner last fall. The Simmons Luminary Award honors individuals or organizations showing extraordinary commitment to improving people’s lives through education. Spellings, Miller and Flowers are the first recipients of the award.

The number of past candidates who are currently bidding program directors at the district level or school principals and department heads are all evidence of the level of commitment and dedication resulting from true leadership training offered at SMU for the past 30 years,” says Viviana Hall ’01, a program graduate who is a bilingual curriculum specialist at a Dallas technology company.

The program also has inspired many Hispanic, African-American and Asian students to go on and earn their doctoral degrees so they can serve the country’s increasingly diverse schools, Hall says.

The anniversary event, scheduled for Oct. 10, will include as many of the 700 program graduates as possible. Hall notes that graduates of what she calls “Dr. Pullen’s program” have remained professional colleagues.

“Dr. Pullen” is William Pullen, associate professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning. Pullen has coordinated the bilingual teacher certification program since 1975 and has been director of teacher training projects in bilingual education funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

Pullen believes the programs do more than teach theory and pedagogy. “It’s not just classroom instruction, but also providing teachers the information on the Latino culture and history of the Latina,” he says.

Rene Martinez ’69, an administrator in the Dallas Independent School District, credits Pullen with producing a program that has had a lasting effect in the community. Martinez has taught a Community and Culture class for the program. “Bill Pullen has really been a front runner in the field of bilingual education, especially in obtaining federal funding for teacher training,” Martinez says. “The program has had a tremendous impact and filled a void.”

For more reunion information, contact Viviana Hall ’01 at vivianah@smu.edu. To learn about the programs, visit smu.edu/BilingualED.

A Writer’s Triumph

Shipa Somaya Goad, a 2007 graduate of the SMU Continuing and Professional Education Creative Writing Program, broke through the publishing world this spring with her first novel, Secret Daughter. Published by Harper-Collins, the novel depicts two families—one in the slums of India and the other in pristine Beverly Hills, California—who are linked by an adopted child. Goad delves into themes of culture, identity and family.

Reviews are excellent, ranging from the Associated Press calling her prose “achingly touching” to Texas Monthly noting that the book’s “gentle rhythms seduce and win the reader over this moving look at two faces of motherhood, oceans apart.”

Alumni Celebrate Bilingual Education’s 30th Year

SMU’s bilingual education programs have made a powerful impact during the past three decades. The proof can be seen throughout North Texas and beyond, with hundreds of the programs’ alumni playing important roles in the lives of children and their families.

An enthusiastic group of those graduates are planning a major celebration this fall to mark the 30th anniversary of the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development.

“A lot of my students have never been past the graduate school’s Creative Writing Program,” says Hall. “Secret Daughter is the first novel by Shipa Somaya Goad, a graduate of the school’s Creative Writing Program. Her book comes from the series.

Goad, who lives in Dallas, says her training and contacts through the Creative Writing Program helped her get published. The program is part of the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Development.

For more information about the Creative Writing Program, visit smu.edu/CreativeWriting.

Making a Mark On History

Teacher Andrea Norris Kline ’08 (left) and Christa DeLutio, associate professor of history in Dedman College, were honored at the unveiling of a commemorative marker for which they provided research. The marker, outside of the Old Red Courthouse in Dallas, commemorates the right for women to serve on juries.

Andrea Norris Kline ’08 brings her enthusiasm for history to her eighth-grade Elsie Roberts Middle School students in Lancaster, Texas, dressing as a pioneer woman for her unit on westward expansion and wearing a three-pointed hat during discussions about Colonial times.

She also draws on her SMU experiences to make history come alive for her students. “SMU opened opportunities for me to share with the kids,” she says.

Kline studied education at the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development and majored in history.

Last fall Kline and Crista DeLutio, associate professor of history, were honored at the unveiling of a historical marker at the Old Red Courthouse in downtown Dallas. Kline’s research under DeLutio led to the establishment of the marker commemorating Texas women’s fight for the right to serve on juries.

Although the 19th amendment gave women in 1920 the right to vote, it took each state to pass a local decision to grant a woman’s right to jury service. Texas women gained the right to jury service in 1934. 56 years after receiving the right to vote. Kline’s students gave her their approval when she told them about her role in the historical marker dedication—a standing ovation.

A History Department scholarship enabled her to spend a summer in England at SMU-in-Oxford. “A lot of my students have never been past Lancaster,” she says. “When we talk about the English colonies, I show them my photos of Buckingham Palace, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. I like to give them some idea of how they know they can go and see the world, too.”

Just in her second year of teaching, Kline is head of the History department at the Lancaster school for 7th and 8th graders.

“My education courses and hours of classroom observation gave me the preparation and confidence I needed,” she says.