



MOVING FORWARD | THE DEAN'S VIEW



Celebrating Successes

Graduation marks a milestone in intellectual pursuits. As proud graduates march upon the stage, faculty members pause to reflect and bask in their students' accomplishments. They know how much effort it takes to get to that day, and during the pandemic, it has been doubly hard. In spite of the pandemic, 119 students will graduate this month. Thanks to our resilient faculty, staff, and students we were able to stay the course.

In addition to teaching during difficult circumstances, our faculty has been incredibly productive with research projects. For fiscal year '20-'21, we received 21 new grants and the funding value of our projects is \$38.8 million. We have a lot to be thankful for in Simmons.

I said at the onset that we were not aiming just to survive this pandemic – we wanted to thrive – and Simmons has done this

beautifully. I cannot remember another time in my career when I have felt such respect for educators at all levels. As the year concludes, I wish you bright holidays and a Happy New Year.

Stephanie L Knight

Leon Simmons Endowed Dean

ENGAGE



Dept. of Education Awards Ketterlin Geller \$8 Million for Math Intervention Project

The US Department of Education's FY 2021 Education Innovation and Research Competition awarded **Professor Leanne Ketterlin Geller** an \$8 million grant to enhance instructional practices to meet the high needs of students experiencing math difficulties in grades 4-8.

Ketterlin Geller and three co-PI's, Sarah Powell, Ph.D., the University of Texas at Austin, Erica Lembke, Ph.D., the University of Missouri, and Andrew Swanlund, Ph.D., American Institutes for Research, will examine the effectiveness of an intervention, *Fraction Face-Off*, which has demonstrated positive impact on mathematics achievement. They will address the need to accelerate learning for these students and find cost-effective ways to scale up the practice so students' understanding of fractions and general mathematics can prepare them for algebra.



NSF Grants \$2.5 Million to Walkington and Collaborators to Develop App for Students to Create Math Walks

Associate Professor Candace Walkington believes the best way for students to understand math is to make it part of their lives. A \$2.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation allows her and her collaborators to develop a math app that students can use in their everyday lives. The idea is to create guided walks that illustrate how mathematical principles can be found in one's surroundings. Walkington will partner with Dallas STEM walk nonprofit, talkSTEM, to better understand how educators can support math education outside of school.

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Baker Receives Higher Education Awards for Policy Research

The Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) has honored **Simmons Assistant Professor Dominique J. Baker** with the Excellence in Public Policy Higher Education Award. The citation recognizes her substantial body of published work on how higher education policies affect minority students.

Baker also was recognized by the Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP) with its Early Career Award. She is a faculty member in the Department of Education Policy and Leadership.

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Spencer Foundation Funds Sedlacek to Study Science Teachers' Experiences with Language and Race

A grant from the **Spencer Foundation** will support **Assistant Professor Quentin Sedlacek**, Department of Teaching and Learning, in his examination of how language, race, and racism intersect in science education. He will investigate current and prospective K-12 science teachers as they learn about African American English (AAE) in their teacher education coursework.



Fresh Thinking on Ph.D. Student Recruitment

A collaboration between the University of Texas at Austin, SMU Simmons, and the University of Missouri aims to create the next generation of researchers and leaders with Ph.D.'s in special education. The project, *Leaders Investigating Mathematics Evidence (LIME)* at The University of Texas at Austin, received a \$3.6 million, five-year grant from the Department of Education's **Office of Special Education Programs** (OSEP) to support doctoral students focused on mathematics in learning disabilities.

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INNOVATE



New Partnership Leverages the Transformational Power of Sport to Improve Kids' Well-being

SMU Simmons and Children's Health through its Children's Health Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine are launching a collaboration dedicated to improving children's health and activity levels. The Youth Sports Impact Partnership, a unique university-hospital relationship, will use an evidence-based approach to improve access to youth sports, prevent injury and share age-appropriate training and development practices. The research directors are **SMU Simmons Professor Peter Weyand** (pictured left), and **Dr. James Andrews**, founder and director of the Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine, (pictured right).

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West Dallas STEM School Opens with Seventh and Eighth Grades

The new West Dallas STEM School, a Dallas Independent School District Transformation and Innovation School, is the result of more than three years of collaboration between Dallas ISD, the Toyota USA Foundation, SMU's Simmons School of Education and Human Development, and the West Dallas community. The school opened this August with 7th and 8th grades.

The school features an inquiry-based, industry-informed STEM curriculum and will have wraparound community services that include extracurricular academic programming and student and family counseling. Pre-Kindergarten through 1st grade will open in 2022 and a new grade will be added each year thereafter until the school serves pre-K through 8th-grade students.

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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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