

Finding the answer to that question is the mission of the Center on Research and Evaluation at the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development. The newly created center supports faculty research and program evaluations, through development of knowledge and dissemination of information. "As a school, our job is not just to impart evidence-based practices, but to create the evidence," says Simmons Dean David Chard.

The center is run by Executive Director Scott Baker, who has been a principal investigator on 30 federally funded grants and is the former associate director of the University of Oregon's Center on Teaching and Learning. He believes in the importance of providing a wide range of services for the faculty, including placing research findings into practice. "We want to collaborate with faculty and other institutions and have direct applications to what happens in schools," he says.

Another component of the center is to conduct evaluations of area organizations serving children and families. "We are

finding an opportunity to work more closely with these organizations to help them understand the purpose of evaluation," Baker says. "What we are hearing from them is that they would like to use data from evaluations to help improve their services."

The center is working on program evaluations with organizations such as the Concilio, Dallas Arboretum, Parish Episcopal School and Texans Can Academies. Also in development is a major evaluation of The School Zone in West Dallas, a collaboration between 27 nonprofits, 16 public, private and charter schools, including the Dallas Independent School District's feeder schools for L.G. Pinkston High School. The

School Zone is led by Simmons' Center on Communities and Education.

Securing research funding is key to the center's success. So far this academic year, Simmons faculty members have brought in grants totaling \$6.4 million. The goal is to reach \$10 million annually. "This is a formidable challenge," Chard says, "but our faculty members are active researchers and I anticipate that external agency funding will quickly surpass our goal."

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Through rigorous research and fresh thinking, we in the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development are strengthening our commitment to teaching.

Now in our seventh year on campus, we wish to acknowledge a growing constituency of support. Thanks to our alumni and friends, we are able to draw important resources to advance our work. With financial support for scholarships, we can attract and retain top scholars who will complete their degrees and make a profound impact on people's lives through their work.

I encourage you to support our future leaders and help us move the Simmons School forward in a strong direction.

With appreciation,

David J. Chard, Ph.D.
Leon Simmons Endowed Dean

Changing Minds is published by the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development for alumni, friends, students, faculty and staff of the school. Lette nsthe AB7aldw4ett Ssta to:4 Td [(Le42,8336 113,5 53,7cia5382,833 in Garland, TX, wrote Teaching Tolerancestudents feel like they are disappearing from their own that their lives are beyond their control. www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-46-spring-2014Greenidge received her M.Ed. in Ed School Leadership program. She has played a central role in managing The School Zone, a multi-partner education partnership that supports struggling students and their families in West Dallas. Her work is highlighted as part of SMU's World Changes Shaped Here campaign. Read more at smu.edu/World/Stories/CR sponsors its annual breakfast on education. This year's topic focuses on parental For information, contact Erin Crosby, in June: MLS' art history tour in Italy and two Dispute Resolution courses in Madrid Visit smu.edu/MLS and smu.