

Simmons College Welcomes New President

BOSTON (July 1, 2008)—Simmons College today welcomed Helen Drinan, a respected New England leader, as college president.

Drinan has been a member of the Simmons College Board of Trustees since 2003 and board chair since 2007. She replaces Susan Scrimshaw, who stepped down from the presidency to undertake other work in higher education administration and public health advocacy.

Simmons Board of Trustees vice chair Steve Jonas said Drinan will serve a two- to three-year presidency, as the college fills key staff positions and continues its forward momentum toward nationally recognized excellence.

Drinan is a well-known and respected leader in health care, civic and business circles. In addition to her 19-year career at BankBoston Corporation and her four-and-a-half-year term as senior vice president of Caritas Christi Health Care System, she has served on the board of directors of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts since 1995, and was president of the Society for Human Resource Management, the world's largest professional association devoted to human resource management.

Jonas said Drinan is “a seasoned and respected leader. She is well-known in the Boston area for her long tenure as the top woman executive at BankBoston Corporation, and more recently for her service as senior vice president of the Caritas Christi Health Care System. She is also someone who has demonstrated a deep commitment to Simmons for decades, who will keep Simmons College on its current path to national prominence.”

Drinan has been closely associated with Simmons for more than 30 years. She holds two Simmons degrees: a master's from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, and an MBA from its School of Management. She is a recipient of the Phyllis Rappaport Alumnae Achievement Award granted by the Simmons School of Management.

The Simmons board elected Lauren Brisky, vice chancellor for administration and chief financial officer of Vanderbilt University, as the new Simmons board chair.

Simmons College is a pioneering, nationally ranked university in Boston with nearly 2,100 undergraduate students and 2,600 graduate students. Founded in 1899 as the first women's college in the nation to combine liberal arts with career preparation, Simmons today has an undergraduate college for women and graduate programs for women, and men in social work, management, health sciences, library and information science, and liberal arts.

Simmons College has been named a “Best College” in its category by U.S. News & World Report, one of “365 Best Colleges” by Princeton Review, and one of “25 cutting-edge schools with an eye toward the future” by the Kaplan college guidebook “You Are Here.” For two years in a row, Simmons has been named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction, for its leadership in civic engagement and outstanding volunteer service to the community.