



The Scott/Ross Center for Community Service Learning That Changes Lives



Connecting classroom to community



More than one third of Simmons students engage in some form of community service during the course of an academic year.



For more than 100 years, Simmons College has inspired its students to combine learning with action for a more just and equitable world. Today, the Scott/Ross Center (S/RC) for Community Service takes the lead in advancing this commitment to visionary education and civic engagement. Established in 2000 through the generosity of Emily Scott Pottruck '78, a trustee of the College, and her husband David Pottruck, the S/RC provides life-changing opportunities for our students through mutually enriching community partnerships. The Center is named in honor of Emily and her mother, Arlene Ross Gross '47.

The S/RC works closely with nearly 60 community-based organizations. Whether it's tackling social justice issues such as homelessness and hunger, mentoring youth on literacy, science, and math, or becoming a pen pal to a middle-school student, we offer our entire campus a variety of ways to get involved, among them, stimulating service-learning courses and exciting all-College signature initiatives. We're also one of the only community service centers in the country to provide comprehensive service programs for both undergraduate and graduate students.



“Students say that their involvement with the Scott/Ross Center is life-changing. Their perceptions are altered; their minds are opened. They gain a sense of purpose and think beyond themselves.”

EMILY SCOTT POTTRUCK '78

By partnering with organizations that truly improve lives, the S/RC helps Simmons students to discover collaborative solutions as well as an individual passion for service. In return, our students deepen their knowledge, leadership, and compassion for a lifetime of community engagement.



The S/RC has emerged a nationally recognized leader. The Corporation for National and Community Service has consistently named the S/RC to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, making Simmons the only college in Massachusetts to receive the "Honor Roll with Distinction" four times and one of just 18 colleges nationwide so recognized.

A MEANINGFUL MISSION

The Scott/Ross Center for Community Service facilitates and promotes community service and service-learning for Simmons College students, faculty, and staff in Greater Boston and beyond. By developing reciprocal partnerships with community-based organizations, we enrich and expand students' educational and co-curricular experiences.

This goal reflects the College's four core values:

- We are at our best when students come first.
- We cross boundaries to create opportunities.
- We prepare students for life's work.
- We make a collective investment in community.



S/RC Opportunities for Undergraduates



Each semester, 400 students participate in service-learning.

SERVICE-LEARNING

Service-learning is at the core of what we do best — and is transformative for many students. By directly connecting service to academic coursework, this hands-on teaching method provides students with opportunities to apply classroom knowledge, reflect on their experiences, and strengthen new skills, all while fulfilling community needs. The effects are often profound; students come away with great personal and professional growth, a fuller understanding of social issues, and the ability to foster change.

The undergraduate service-learning program spans multiple academic departments including management, sociology, education, psychology, biology, and social justice. Students commit to an average of 25 hours of service throughout the semester with a community-based organization that has identified projects and activities that match the students' course objectives.

“The Scott/Ross Center played a pivotal role in my Simmons experience helping me nurture my love for service and showing me that it’s possible to take what you learn and make it what you want.”

ANNIE DUNBAR '10, PSYCHOLOGY, GATEWAY AND EDUCATION SPARKS



“Simmons College faculty are incredibly fortunate to have the Scott/Ross Center to assist them in connecting students with community partners for service-learning opportunities. The positive relationships the Center has formed with the community agencies have resulted in the creation of experiences that students find meaningful, relevant, and often transformative. Hats off to them!”

TONI TASKER, D.P.T., O.C.S., P.T., SENIOR LECTURER, PHYSICAL THERAPY

SAMPLE SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECTS

Communications students worked in teams to create a new advertising campaign for recruiting women of color to become mentors for **Big Sister Association of Greater Boston**.

Biology students learning about exercise and physiology created workshops for inner-city youth at the **Tobin Community Center** on how physical activity can prevent illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and breast cancer.

Sociology students studying globalization paired up as conversation partners with adult English Language Learners at the **YMCA International Learning Center**. The Simmons students asked the participants about their stories of emigration and created a poster board and presentation about what they learned.



Simmons has offered nearly 40 undergraduate courses with a service-learning focus.



“Being an active participant for the Scott/Ross Center has been the most rewarding experience in my four years at Simmons. I was never sure about what I wanted to do with my life after college until I began working with **Education Sparks**. Seeing the kids develop mentally, physically, socially, and academically on a daily basis led me to pursue a degree in public health, hopefully, allowing me to develop the lives of others to be healthier and happier individuals!”

CALLIE MURPHY '12, PUBLIC HEALTH

Studies show that students who participate in service-learning perform better academically and are more likely to finish college.

More exciting ways for undergraduates to serve

ADVANCED CERTIFICATE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (AC2E)

The **AC2E** program is a new multi-year initiative that provides an intensive, highly rewarding learning experience for Simmons students interested in community service. Through a two-pronged approach of service and reflection, students work with one organization from freshman to senior year, taking on more challenging projects as they progress. This immersive approach develops diverse skills and experiences and makes a clear impact on the community. Students explore ways to connect their passion for service with their academic interests and complete a four-credit independent study capstone project.



STUDENT-LED PROGRAMS AND FEDERAL WORK-STUDY

Student leaders play a vital role in the success of the Center. They manage and inspire their peers while also gaining professional development and leadership skills that will help them achieve their career goals. They plan curricula, direct sessions, and provide invaluable insight to S/RC staff. There are 14 student-led programs including:

America Reads, a literacy and tutoring program for elementary students

Steps to Success, an organization that provides mentoring support to middle-school children with a focus on college access and success

Starlight, a nonprofit that hosts events for children with chronic and life-threatening illnesses and life-altering injuries

Strong Women, Strong Girls, a mentoring program designed to build self-esteem and communities of strong young girls and women based on female role models throughout history

Girls' LEAP, a nonprofit agency that offers self-defense and empowerment programs

“The S/RC has allowed me to make civic engagement part of my life. Through my service I’ve found my niche — not only at Simmons but also within the Greater Boston community.”

ALLISON WHITTIER '13, PSYCHOLOGY AND PUBLIC HEALTH



A LEAP TOWARD LEARNING!

Jumpstart is one of our most recognizable student service programs. This early education nonprofit organization teams college students as Corps members with preschool children in low-income Boston communities to work with children’s language, literacy, and social-emotional skills. Jumpstart is working toward the day every child in America enters school prepared to succeed.

Each year, Simmons expends about 30 percent of its total federal work-study funds for community-service positions. This far exceeds the seven percent minimum the federal government requires.

The Center employs nearly 200 students in a wide range of community-based programs, most of which are student-led. These are paid student positions funded through the federal community service work-study program. Students must have Federal Work-Study (FWS) as part of their financial aid award in order to receive payment for their service, although students without FWS can participate. Programs eligible for FWS funds focus on tutoring and mentoring youth and include, in addition to the programs above, **826 Boston**, an organization that supports strong writing skills for kids ages 6 to 18, and **Science Club for Girls**, a science and engineering program for girls in underserved communities.



“Jumpstart is an amazing organization because you’re able to gradually see the change you’re making in each child’s life. When an English language learning child can finally identify all the letters in his or her name because of our work together, I know I’m part of a wonderful organization. Jumpstart is not just a job; it’s a commitment each member makes wholeheartedly!”

ASHLEY HODGES-SIMMONS '14, PSYCHOLOGY, JUMPSTART CORPS MEMBER

ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK

Simmons Builds partners with **Habitat for Humanity** to construct a house during spring break. Students lead the efforts to choose a site, fundraise for travel expenses, and reflect and bond as a group. There are often other opportunities to serve during spring break, such as **Boston Immersion**, a local initiative that selects a specific program focus each year, and the **Graduate School of Library and Information Science Alternative Spring Break** with a local school library.

S/RC opportunities for graduate students



"It has been remarkably helpful to both participate in and support the coordination of service-learning projects and community service. Networking in a community can encourage its connection to higher education, and I have been particularly moved to do this important work in the community where I was raised."

D'LYNN JACOBS '12, GENDER/CULTURAL STUDIES AND COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

GRADUATE SERVICE-LEARNING

Simmons is one of the few colleges in the nation to offer a comprehensive service-learning program for graduate students. More than 300 graduate students participate annually in service-learning courses, graduate-program-specific community engagement programs, and all-College volunteer opportunities. Through the S/RC, graduate students contract with real clients, build relationships with local nonprofits, and gain experience in professional areas of study — all while serving their community.

Graduate service-learning typically follows a project-based model, in which students work in teams to address a problem or challenge for a partner organization. In addition to class, students spend 40 hours per semester collaborating with their community partners. Previously, they've partnered with local organizations such as the **YWCA**, **Boston Healthcare for the Homeless**, the **Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston**, the **Women's Lunch Place**, and the **Fenway Community Development Corporation**.

SAMPLE PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

Doctoral Physical Therapy service-learning students work with the homeless, elderly, youth, and women inmates to lead health education and advocacy programs.

Masters in Communications Management service-learning students deliver strategic communication plans that address public relations, change management, volunteer communications, and branding and image to nonprofit partners.

Graduate Library and Information Science students apply their library and information organization and management skills to Boston Public School libraries through semester-long programming and an annual Alternative Spring Break at a local school library.

Simmons has offered 22 graduate courses with a service-learning focus.

S/RC opportunities for the Simmons community

FELLOWSHIPS AND ASSISTANTSHIPS

The Center offers graduate and undergraduate students paid assistantships and fellowships and provides scholarships for students interested in community engagement and leadership.

- The S/RC Fellowship in Nonprofit Management gives Simmons students the opportunity to spend eight weeks during the summer with the **Boston Foundation** and community partners undertaking projects and gaining experience in nonprofit management, philanthropy, and grant-making while exploring nonprofit careers.
- Through **AmeriCorps** and the **Massachusetts Campus Compact**, students who complete 300 hours of service receive an AmeriCorps Student Leader in Service Education Award.

COMING TOGETHER AS A CAMPUS

At Simmons, service is a College-wide commitment. The S/RC's "signature initiatives" unite the entire Simmons community — faculty, staff, students, and alumnae/i — in engaging volunteer activities.

- The Simmons community contributes to **Frosty's Friends**, providing holiday gifts for more than 50 children in local community centers.
- More than 250 members of the Simmons community participate in the literacy and mentoring program **Promising Pals** at the James P. Timilty Middle School in Roxbury.
- On **Global Service Day**, all Simmons students, faculty, alumnae/i, and staff members participate in on- and off-campus service activities.



"Undoubtedly, the experience as an AmeriCorp Student Leader in Service through the Scott/Ross Center helped me to grow into a more mature human being and stronger student leader. While the journey was not always easy, it presented me with challenges that demanded a refined skill set. In standing up to those challenges, meeting the needs of others before my own, holding my ground, and defending what I deemed to be right in the face of adversity and scarcity, I experienced the deepest growth and greatest reward."

LAURA MELKONIAN '12, GRADUATE SPANISH, AMERICORPS STUDENT LEADERS IN SERVICE 2010-2011

Building a better Boston — together

ISSUES WITH IMPACT

S/RC partnerships are built on reciprocity and address a wide and diverse range of areas including:

- Youth education
- Health
- Hunger and homelessness
- Empowerment and development of girls and women
- Tutoring and mentoring
- The elderly
- The LGBT community
- The physically and mentally challenged

“Simmons is amazing. The resources they’re providing are invaluable. And youth are getting a firsthand understanding of what college is all about.”

JIMMY WYMAN, EDUCATION DIRECTOR, SOCIEDAD LATINA



For community partners wishing to list a volunteer opportunity on the S/RC’s semi-monthly campus announcements, contact volunteer@simmons.edu.

Our community partnerships are the cornerstone of the S/RC’s programs and service initiatives. S/RC staff, along with Simmons faculty and student leaders, work closely with community partner staff and members to develop strong relationships that meet critical community needs while providing Simmons students meaningful experiences focused on sustainability and impact. The S/RC has more than 60 community-based partners, many of which are located not far from our campus in the Fenway, Mission Hill, Jamaica Plain, and Roxbury neighborhoods.

The opportunities are many and growing; our anchor partners may hold summer programs on campus, serve as guest speakers, apply for grants together, use campus space for meetings and events, and participate in innovative professional development, scholarship, and fellowship programming. Anchor partners such as the **Boston Teachers Union School** and the **Mission Hill School** may work with students and faculty across disciplines and on both undergraduate and graduate levels.

For a complete listing of partners, please check the S/RC website www.simmons.edu/communityservice.



“For several years we have had the pleasure of working with both students and staff from the S/RC in our shelter, administrative office, and in the classroom. They care deeply about the Boston community and will always go above and beyond what we have asked. Their efforts have made a large impact on the work that we do, and the lives of the guests at the Women’s Lunch Place.”

LAUREN REILLY, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, WOMEN’S LUNCH PLACE



“Community partnerships are essential to meeting our mission and we are fortunate to partner with such a great institution as Simmons College — mission-driven, dedicated, and community-focused.”

JOSH KRAFT, NICHOLAS PRESIDENT AND CEO, BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF BOSTON



S/RC LEADERSHIP

Professor of Sociology Stephen London, Ph.D., is the founding director of the Scott/Ross Center. “Our recognition over the years as a national leader in community service is a testament to our dedicated student body, committed S/RC staff, innovative faculty, and our many longstanding community partners,” he says.

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Building a better Boston — together



“The Scott Ross Center is a tremendous asset and leader in our communities. Its commitment to student leadership is critical to the success of our city.”

ROBERT LEWIS, JR., VICE PRESIDENT FOR PROGRAM, THE BOSTON FOUNDATION



“Participating in the S/RC allowed me to witness what a difference I could make in the community. I had my first big leadership opportunities at Simmons which prepared me for roles that I would later hold in my career.”

JESSICA VEROSTICK '04, PSYCHOLOGY



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