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**Simmons College Hosts African-American Women Leaders To Discuss Arts, Media & Politics;  
Celebrate 50th Anniversary of Selma Voting Rights March, March 25**

BOSTON (March 23, 2015) — In honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Selma Voting Rights March, Simmons College will host a panel of four African-American women leaders to discuss the intersections of art, media, and politics. The panel will be held at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design March 25, at 6 p.m.

Speakers include multicultural visual artist, children’s illustrator, and Simmons College Eileen Friars Leader-in-Residence, **Synthia Saint James**; Executive Producer and Host of *WCVB-TV Ch. 5* show *CityLine* **Karen Holmes Ward**; Senior Editor at Penguin Random House, **Stacey Barney**; and Founder of The Color of Film Collaborative and the Roxbury International Film Festival, **Lisa Simmons**. **Renée T. White**, sociologist and Simmons College Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, will moderate the panel.

“This panel provides an opportunity for us to think about how art can push us to see and experience the world differently and why creative expression matters,” said Dean White.

In addition to the Eileen Friars Leader-in-Residence Program at Simmons College, the panel is co-sponsored in part by the MassArt Office of Multicultural Programs and the Emmanuel College Office of Student Activities and Multicultural Programs

The panel is part of series of free and public events featuring Saint James who is visiting Simmons College, March 23-27, as the Simmons College **Eileen Friars Eileen Friars Leader-in-Residence**, a program established by Simmons trustee emerita Eileen Friars ’72, to draw on the experiences of women who have distinguished themselves in their professions. Also on March 25, Saint James will host several walking tours of her work Simmons’s campus, including the world premiere reveal of Saint James’s “**How Long Not Long**,” a painting celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March. For a full list of the week’s events, click [here](#).

“My hope is that the viewers will see and feel the powerful strength and unity of the multicultural people depicted—of all ages and religious faiths—as they proudly march together for the good of all man and womankind,” said Saint James.

Saint James is a world-renowned multicultural visual artist, award winning author/illustrator of 17 children's books, and author of various books of poetry, affirmations, a play, cookbook, and the autobiography *Living My Dream: An Artistic Approach to Marketing*. She is most celebrated for designing the first Kwanzaa stamp for the United States Postal Service in 1997, for which she received a History Maker Award, and for the international cover art for Terry McMillan's book *Waiting to Exhale*. Her artwork has also been internationally featured in several United States Embassies through the Art in Embassies Program since the 1990's.

Founded in 1899, Simmons College (<http://www.simmons.edu>) is a nationally ranked university located in the heart of Boston, and the preeminent authority on women’s leadership. Simmons offers undergraduate education for women, and the nation's first MBA program designed for women. Simmons also provides renowned coeducational graduate programs in nursing and health sciences, liberal arts, library and information science, and social work. Follow Simmons on Twitter [@SimmonsCollege](#) and [@SimmonsNews](#).

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