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**ACTRESSES AND ACTIVISTS AMERICA FERRERA AND GEENA DAVIS TO SPEAK
AT 37TH SIMMONS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

Longest-Running Women’s Leadership Conference Features “Women Leading Change”

BOSTON, Mass. (March 7, 2016) – With a focus on women who have broken the mold, [Simmons College](#) will feature actresses and activists America Ferrera and Geena Davis for its premier leadership conference for women. The 37th annual [Simmons Leadership Conference](#) also includes pioneering attorney Anita Hill, financial powerhouse Carla Harris, and scientist and innovator Ping Fu. The sold-out event will be held on March 29, 2016 at the Seaport World Trade Center Boston.

This year’s conference features presentations from more than 20 nationally and internationally prominent leaders who will share their personal leadership experiences and offer practical advice around the conference theme “Women Leading Change.” More than 3,300 business and professional women and men are expected to attend.

Proceeds from the Simmons Leadership Conference are dedicated to Simmons College graduate program scholarships, furthering the development and advancement of future corporate, organizational, and civic leaders. The Conference is the capstone event of SimmonsLEADS, a set of dynamic programs and events developed by Simmons College that focus on the empowerment and development of women leaders.

“Each year, the conference gives attendees the opportunity to learn from women who have innovated, taken risks, and overcome challenges to rise to the top of their respective fields,” said Judy Benjamin, Executive Director, SimmonsLEADS, Simmons College. “These women also make the time to engage on multiple fronts, leveraging their broad talents to help others. Attendees tell us that the blend of inspiring speakers, skill-building workshops, and opportunities to network make the conference one of the most empowering and energizing days of their year.”

Notable Speakers

Award-winning actress, producer, and activist [America Ferrera](#) is perhaps best known as Betty Suarez in the groundbreaking TV series *Ugly Betty*, a performance that earned her Golden Globe, Emmy, and Screen Actors Guild Awards. Ferrera currently produces and stars in the new workplace comedy *Superstore*, and recently launched her own television and film development company, Take Fountain Productions. In between times, she lends her acting talents to projects aligned with her longtime activism on behalf of women and the Latino community. She currently co-chairs the Voto Latino Artist Coalition, which works to encourage young Latinos to become politically active.

Academy Award winner [Geena Davis](#) is known for her memorable portrayals of strong, quirky characters in such films as *Thelma and Louise* and *A League of Their Own*. She also broke new ground in her Golden Globe-winning role as the first female U.S. President in the hit TV show *Commander in Chief*. She founded the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media and its programming arm See Jane, which engages film and television creators to increase the percentage of female characters and reduce gender stereotyping in the entertainment industry.

A compelling voice on issues of race, gender, and workplace discrimination in America, [Anita Hill](#) is university professor of social policy, law, and women's studies at Brandeis University. In 1991, she was propelled into the national spotlight with her courageous testimony during the Senate Judiciary hearings on Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas. She has published an autobiography, *Speaking Truth to Power*, and her latest book, *Reimagining Equality: Stories of Gender, Race, and Finding Home*.

[Carla Harris](#) is Vice Chairman of Global Wealth Management and Senior Client Advisor at Morgan Stanley. She formerly headed the Emerging Manager Platform, an equity capital markets initiative for the consumer and retail industries. A woman of many talents, Ms. Harris has published two books on career strategies and is an accomplished singer, having performed four sold-out concerts at Carnegie Hall. In 2013, Ms. Harris was appointed by President Obama to chair the National Women's Business Council.

[Ping Fu](#) describes herself as an artist and scientist whose chosen expression is business. Fu is the co-founder and former CEO of Geomagic, a pioneering 3D software development company that changed the way products are designed and manufactured, with applications that range from personalizing prosthetic limbs to repairing NASA space shuttles. She is currently vice president and chief entrepreneur officer of 3D Systems, Inc., which acquired Geomagic in 2013.

[Edie Weiner](#) is president and CEO of The Future Hunters, one of the world's leading futurist consulting firms. She has helped more than 400 clients identify opportunities in the areas of marketing, product development, strategic planning, investments, and human resources. Ms. Weiner has served on more than 30 boards, including the U.S. Comptroller General's Advisory Board. She has co-authored four books, including the international bestseller *FutureThink*.

Other Speakers and Moderators

[Linda Alvarado](#) is the first woman and first Hispanic to own a Major League Baseball franchise, the Colorado Rockies. She is president and CEO of Alvarado Construction, Inc., a commercial general contractor and construction management firm.

[Gail Baker](#) is senior vice president, Engine & Environmental Control Systems (EECS), for UTC Aerospace Systems. Her role was recently expanded to include the Air Management Systems segment, which provides systems for commercial and military aircraft.

[Laura Gentile](#) is the founder of espnW, ESPN's first business dedicated to women who love sports. Now senior vice president of espnW and Women's Initiatives, she has created an innovative multimedia operation encompassing digital, social, television, film, and events.

[Jeffery Tobias Halter](#) is president of YWomen, a consulting company focused on engaging men in women's leadership issues. Drawing on 30 years of experience, he helps organizations develop measurable plans to tap the power of women in the workplace and marketplace.

[Felecia Hatcher](#), Chief Popsicle of Feverish Ice Cream & Gourmet Pops, leveraged her knack for marketing to form strategic partnerships with major companies – including Procter & Gamble, Google, Universal Music, and Adidas – to promote her firm's gourmet pops.

[Margaret Heffernan](#) is an entrepreneur, renowned author, chief executive, and popular TED Talk presenter. She has shared lessons from her broad management experience in several books, including her most recent one: *Beyond Measure: The Big Impact of Small Changes*.

[Liz Kelley](#) is a vice president at Hewlett Packard Enterprise, a multi-billion dollar information technology and services company. She is responsible for developing and executing complex corporate initiatives and transactions on behalf of the company's largest IT services clients.

[Deborah Kolb](#) is a Distinguished Research Fellow at the Simmons School of Management. She is the author of more than 100 articles on gender, negotiation, conflict, and mediation. Dr. Kolb recently published a book, *Negotiating at Work: Turn Small Wins into Big Gains*.

A Stanford University lecturer, bestselling author, and popular TED Talk presenter, health psychologist [Kelly McGonigal's](#) passion is to translate research in psychology, neuroscience, and medicine into strategies for improved personal health, happiness, and social change.

[Beth Phalen](#), senior vice president at EMC Corporation, leads Data Protection & Availability Solutions within the Core Technology Division. With a team of more than 1,800 employees, she is responsible for products and services that drive more than \$3 billion in revenue.

Internationally renowned leadership expert [Michelle Ray](#) is CEO and founder of the Lead Yourself First Institute. As an entrepreneur for the past 20 years, she has delivered her insights about leadership, accountability, and engaged workplaces to thousands of audiences.

[Precillia Redmond](#) is vice president and manager of organizational effectiveness and strategic project management services at Liberty Mutual Insurance Group. She is responsible for driving the strategic agenda for talent and enterprise services.

[Maggie Ruvoldt](#) is executive vice president and general manager at 2U, Inc., an education technology company that partners with nonprofit colleges and universities to deliver online degree programs.

[Joyce Kulhawik](#) will serve as the conference host and moderator. Session moderators include broadcast journalist [Callie Crossley](#), award-winning business journalist [Susie Gharib](#), and Professor [Teresa Nelson](#), Ph.D., the Elizabeth J. McCandless Professor of Entrepreneurship Chair at the Simmons School of Management and Director of the Entrepreneurship Program.

About the Simmons Leadership Conference

Simmons College has presented this conference continuously for 37 years, and it is the premier women's leadership conference in the country. The conference has featured such notable speakers as Madeleine Albright, Christiane Amanpour, Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Carly Fiorina, Arianna Huffington, Billie Jean King, Toni Morrison, Anne Mulcahy, Queen Noor, Jehan Sadat, Oprah Winfrey, and the late Benazir Bhutto.

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