

Wake Forest Law professor and alumni join group to cut crime, incarceration

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Wake Forest Law Professor Kami Chavis Simmons, director of the law school's Criminal Justice Program, has joined more than 130 current and former police chiefs, sheriffs, federal and state prosecutors, and attorneys general from all 50 states to form Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime and Incarceration to urge for a reduction in both crime and incarceration. Wake Forest Law Alumni Walter Holton (JD '84), former U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of North Carolina, and Ben David (JD '95), district attorney for New Hanover and Pender counties in North Carolina, are also founding members of the group.

"This is a critical time in our nation with respect to criminal justice reform," Professor Simmons said. "There is now widespread bipartisan support for major changes including alternatives to arrest and reforming mandatory minimum laws. We are experienced current and former law enforcement officials who know that we can reduce mass incarceration and crime at the same time."

Law Enforcement Leaders is a project of the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law. The New York Times wrote about the new group here and NPR featured the group on Morning Edition today.

The group's mission is: "As current and former leaders of the law enforcement community — police chiefs, sheriffs, district and state's attorneys, U.S. Attorneys, attorneys general and other leaders — protecting public safety is a vital goal. From experience and through data-driven and innovative practices, we know the country can reduce crime while also reducing unnecessary arrests, prosecutions, and incarceration. We can also reduce recidivism and strengthen relationships with



Simmons

communities. With the goal of building a smarter, stronger, and fairer criminal justice system, we are joining together to urge a change in laws and practices to reduce incarceration while continuing to keep our communities safe."

In 2015, Professor Simmons was appointed as a Senior Academic Fellow at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. She has substantial practice experience and writes and teaches in areas related to criminal law, criminal procedure and criminal justice reform.

After receiving her J.D. from Harvard Law School, Simmons worked as an associate at private law firms in Washington, D.C., where she participated in various aspects of civil litigation, white-collar criminal defense, and internal investigations.

In 2003, she became an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, involving her in a wide range of criminal prosecutions and in arguing and briefing appeals before the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Professor Simmons frequently makes presentations on law-enforcement issues

and is a leader in the field of police accountability. Her articles have appeared in the American Criminal Law Review, the Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law, The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, the University of Alabama Law Review, and the Catholic University Law Review, and other legal journals. Her research focuses on using Cooperative Federalism principles and stakeholder participation to implement sustainable reforms in the criminal justice system. She writes in the areas of police and prosecutorial accountability, federal hate crimes legislation and enforcement, and racial profiling. She was elected to the American Law Institute in 2012.

Simmons is a frequent contributor to national and international media outlets and has appeared on CNN, CTV, and NPR. She has written for the New York Times and the Huffington Post, and has been quoted in the Wall Street Journal, BBC News, U.S. News and World Report, International Business Times, Deutsche Welle, and other outlets regarding police accountability and the structural reform of law enforcement agencies.

Children's Museum of W-S awarded prestigious grant



SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Children's Museum of Winston-Salem (CMWS) has been awarded a federal grant of \$150,000 by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). This grant, which must be matched, will support the development, prototyping, fabrication, and installation of an approximately 1,000-square-foot theatre-themed maker space and associated programming, entitled "The Prop Shop".

In addition to repurposing underutilized space in the museum into a permanent maker space exhibition and providing related programming, this project is the ideal collaborative opportunity to integrate the performance arts programming of Peppercorn Theatre at the Children's Museum, and enhance current exhibits and educational programming.

Aligned with the Museums for America Learning Experiences category, "The Prop Shop" and related programming will support learner-driven experiences that engage children and families, school groups, and staff in open-ended, problem-solving processes, integrating experimentation and creativity.

As CMWS looks to incorporate theatre-based play, design, and innovation into its offerings, "The Prop Shop" exhibit will be built to serve as a theatre-focused maker space. Maker spaces are hands-on learning environments to make and remake the physical and digital worlds. These experiences foster experimentation, invention, creation, and exploration through design thinking and project-based learning. Embracing the theme of a technical theatre shop in this project, museum staff will highlight storytelling as a departure point for individual invention, therefore linking the learning goals of "The Prop Shop" with the rest of the museum.

Maker spaces are a fun and effective way for museums to broaden their educational role and impact within the diverse communities they serve. By jointly solving problems in settings like "maker spaces" and "tinkering studios," parents and children become co-learners in a process that builds relationships, encourages communication, and sets the stage for the development of important executive function life skills such as focus, self-control, critical thinking, and taking on challenges.

The installation of the

new exhibit space and complimentary programming will demonstrate and reinforce the distinctive role CMWS plays as an educational institution, while strengthening the Museum's relationship with the Winston-Salem community and surrounding counties.

"The process to receive IMLS funding is competitive and we are honored to have been selected by our peers for funding. This is our second IMLS grant and each funded project is just

one stepping stone towards furthering the Museum's efforts to increase collaboration and partnerships, enhance exhibit and visitor experiences, and expand outreach to the larger community," said Elizabeth Dampier, the Executive Director.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) announced grants for 217 museum projects totaling almost \$26 million. The museums were selected

from 583 applications requesting a total of about \$74 million and were awarded through the highly competitive Museums for America and National Leadership Grants for Museums programs. Institutions receiving the awards are matching them with about \$34 million in non-federal funds.

"IMLS helps museums provide opportunities for visitors to experience science, history, art, technolo-

gy and living collections in unique and interactive ways," said IMLS Acting Director Maura Marx. "With this federal support, museums all over the country will be better equipped to care for their collections, create exhibitions and learning experiences for visitors, and contribute to a better quality of life for their communities."

The Children's Museum of Winston-Salem will celebrate its 11th birth-

day in November. The museum is the community's destination to play and learn through literature, storytelling, and the arts. Every visit to the museum nurtures children's imaginations, creativity, and love of reading with interactive and educational opportunities for exploration and discovery.

For more information, call 336-723-9111 or visit www.childrensmuseumofws.org.

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