



**SXSW EDU® ANNOUNCES PRESIDENT RUTH J. SIMMONS AND *THE ATLANTIC'S* ADAM HARRIS  
IN A KEYNOTE CONVERSATION ON MARCH 8**

*Two New Featured Sessions Now Added to the Program*

**February 22, 2023 // Austin, Texas** – South by Southwest EDU® announces several new powerful voices to the Keynote and Featured Session lineup. The attendees will hear from pioneers in their fields and the breakthroughs they have made to reach students through innovative and dynamic curricula that reflect the whole human, the society we live in, the issues that students face, and the ways that students learn. These speakers will share their journeys to push through barriers to drive academic access, engagement, and achievement for students of all ages, races, and economic backgrounds. The newly added sessions are as follows:

**Keynote Session:**

[Ruth Simmons on Higher Education & American Democracy](#)

Ruth Simmons has a unique perspective on higher education: She has led a women's college, an Ivy League institution, and a public historically Black college. As the nation's postsecondary institutions face a new and evolving set of issues around access, affordability, and curriculum, hear the pioneering president, in conversation with The Atlantic's Adam Harris, discuss the shifts that she has seen in higher education and where we go from here.

**Speakers:**

**Ruth J. Simmons**, President at Prairie View A&M University, President Emerita of Brown University and President Emerita of Smith College

**Adam Harris**, Staff writer at *The Atlantic* and the author of “The State Must Provide: Why America's Colleges Have Always Been Unequal—and How to Set Them Right”

**Featured Sessions:**

[NAEP Results Are Dismal—So Where Do We Go from Here?](#)

Our nation's students have suffered so much during the last few years and we are just now really seeing the brunt of pandemic-related disruptions in learning. The 2022 NAEP results saw huge declines in reading and the largest-ever math decline in the history of NAEP. We will explore promising practices

to boost student learning and talk about how prioritizing rigor and equity and using ARP funds on strategies have been proven to work to address unfinished learning.

**Speakers:**

**Moderator - Denise Forte**, President and CEO of The Education Trust

**Adrienne Battle**, Director of Metro Nashville Public Schools

**Stephanie S. Elizalde, Ed. D.**, Superintendent of Dallas Independent School District

**Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed. D.**, Interim Superintendent of Alexandria City Public Schools

**[Ratchetdemic Street Scholars: A New Direction to Healing in Education](#)**

In this session, Professor Chris Emdin convenes a panel of #HipHopEd experts in psychology, education, and healing to interrogate the ways that a Ratchetdemic approach to scholarship, teaching, and pedagogy can transform wellness in teaching and learning. Angel Jones, Dena Simmons and Napoleon Wells are the foremost experts in their respective fields and situate street scholarship as a path to freedom in education.

**Speakers:**

**Christopher Emdin**, Professor, HipHopEd

**Angel Jones**, Author and Professor at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

**Dena Simmons**, Founder and Executive Director of LiberatED and visiting professor at the Institute for Racial Justice at Loyola University of Chicago

**Napoleon Wells**, Author and Psychologist at the Department of Veterans Affairs

To learn more about programming at the conference and festival, go to [sxswedu.com/program](https://sxswedu.com/program).

**About SXSW EDU:**

The SXSW EDU® Conference & Festival is a reflection of the world's most critical social issues as seen through the lens of education. This year's event will bring together the learner, the practitioner, the entrepreneur, and the visionary to share their groundbreaking stories, tackle complex issues, and build reimagined paths forward. As a community of diverse people who are united around a like-minded vision for the future, SXSW EDU serves as a place for attendees to renew their purpose in practice from both a personal and professional perspective. It is a place to reinforce the core principles of teaching and learning as well as an opportunity to express your creativity and passion for education. SXSW EDU is a component of the South by Southwest® family of conferences and festivals that has grown from 800 to over 8,000 registrants in the last decade. Join the passionate and innovative community at SXSW EDU, March 6-9, 2023.

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