



**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Emily Berge-Thielmann**  
Writer & Digital Content Producer  
413-644-4113  
[eberge@simons-rock.edu](mailto:eberge@simons-rock.edu)

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**Second Annual Founder's Day Lecture with Speaker Friba Rezayee  
Will Be Held on November 16 at Simon's Rock**



GREAT BARRINGTON, MA—The second annual Founder's Day Lecture will be held at Simon's Rock on November 16, 2023, at 7 p.m. with speaker Friba Rezayee. The lecture will occur in the McConnell Theater in the Daniel Arts Center on campus. The event is free and open to the public.

Founder's Day at Simon's Rock is held every year on November 16 to honor and recognize the birthday of founder Elizabeth "Betty" Blodgett Hall. Betty Hall changed education with the radical idea that curious and independent adolescents deserve a new path to college in a fast-changing world. The birth and legacy of this

remarkable educator is celebrated with Founder's Day. This year marks the second annual Founder's Day Lecture.

Friba Rezayee is the founder and the Executive Director of Women Leaders of Tomorrow and its leadership in sports project GOAL (Girls of Afghanistan Lead). She was born and raised in Kabul, Afghanistan. At the age of 18, she made history by competing in Judo at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens as Afghanistan's first-ever female Olympic athlete.

Rezayee's participation in the Olympics brought Afghanistan back to the world stage in sports after the fall of the Taliban. She inspired hundreds of other Afghan girls to join different sports, in a sports revolution for Afghan female athletes.

Friba Rezayee has resided in Vancouver, Canada since 2011 and holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of British Columbia, Canada. Rezayee has been an outspoken and passionate advocate for women and girls' education, gender equality, human rights, and women's rights in Afghanistan and worldwide from an early age to present. She also worked as an educator in the Vancouver, Canada public school system. Rezayee is currently working as the manager of the Afghan Women's Employment Program at YWCA Metro Vancouver area. In addition to that, she has NCCP level 1 certificate in the sports of Judo, along with a certificate to teach women self defense from Judo Canada.

You can find more information on Friba Rezayee and the organization Women Leaders of Tomorrow at the following link: <https://womenleaders.ca/index.php/about-our-founder/>

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### **About Simon's Rock**

[Bard College at Simon's Rock](#) is the only college in the country specifically designed for highly motivated students ready to enter college after the 10th or 11th grade. Simon's Rock offers a challenging program in the liberal arts and sciences, taught exclusively in small seminars by supportive, highly trained faculty, who are leading scholars in their fields. The College grants degrees in more than 35 majors. The Princeton Review's *Best 380 Colleges* rates academics at Simon's Rock higher than Harvard and Princeton.

[Bard Academy at Simon's Rock](#) is the nation's first two-year boarding and day program designed to prepare 9th and 10th graders to start college early. A student entering Bard Academy as a high school freshman will earn an Associate of Arts degree from Bard College at Simon's Rock after only four years and a Bachelor of Arts degree after only six years. The Academy curriculum is designed and taught by students' future college professors who are leading scholars in their fields.

[The Bard Queer Leadership Project](#) (BQLP) is a revolutionary, new Bachelor of Arts degree program designed for, and by, LGBTQIA+ college students to elevate LGBTQIA+ students and college graduates into leadership roles in school and across the workforce while serving as a space for actualizing educational practices designed for students to thrive. The centerpiece of BQLP is a four year dual major B.A. degree combining Queer Leadership with a second academic field.

For more information, visit [simons-rock.edu](https://simons-rock.edu) and [bardacademy.simons-rock.edu](https://bardacademy.simons-rock.edu)

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