

February 10, 2021 #EquityChat  
Dr. Gabrielle Starr (@pomona college),  
President of Pomona College (@pomona college)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Hello and welcome to #EquityChat sponsored by the @CollegeFutures, our special guest tonight is @pomona college president Dr. Gabrielle Starr @SDMesaPrez @iamkeithcurry #EquityAvengers Welcome Dr Starr!  
[@pomona college](#) Hello, Dr. Luster!

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q1. Dr Starr, @pomona college Our education, background, and experiences make us who we are. Please tell us about the non-resume you? We want to know what's not on your resume. #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry  
[@SDMesaPrez](#)

[@pomona college](#) I love learning new things; even more than that I love finding out about new problems that need solving. I also love a dare: if anyone tells me something is impossible, watch out. And my favorite superhero is probably Storm from the X-Men. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Love Storm...

[@pomona college](#) I grew up reading Marvel comics. My dad was a professor at Florida A&M, my mom a high school teacher in Tallahassee. Any and all reading was encouraged!

[@LAeducationnews](#) I am a poetry writer. I am a baker. I am a status quo shaker. I am an education fighter.

[@iamkeithcurry](#) Q2. Dr. Starr, @pomona college . What is your definition of equity? How is equity-minded practice embedded in your work?

[@pomona college](#) Dr. Curry, so glad to "see" you. Equity means focusing on unlocking human potential. It means removing barriers, and lifting up with support where it's most needed. It means we all have basic needs that have to be met before we can excel. 1/2

[@pomona college](#) In my practice it means elevating human dignity, promoting access, and using data to ensure that where you come from doesn't determine where you go. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @Lande\_Ajose #EquityChat

[@ahandsintheair](#) ❤️ "Elevating human dignity"

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q3. Tell us about @pomona college? And your work as their President? #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry  
[@SDMesaPrez](#) @CollegeFutures

[@pomona college](#) Pomona is a liberal arts college. We look demographically very much like America, after an intentional process of recruitment and support. Graduation rates aren't determined by demographics. 1/5

[@pomona college](#) We are about 12% international and about 26% first generation or low wealth. All of our financial aid is grant—no loans. 55% of students receive aid, and last year we distributed \$51.5MM in student aid. We are majority minority. 2/5

[@pomona college](#) Pomona has chosen to emphasize that excellence in education means an equal commitment by our institution to every student we can reach. 3/5

[@pomona college](#) My job is to help find the resources for us to fulfill the mission of sending compassionate, talented students out into the world with the full equipment to succeed and to bring others up with them. 4/5

[@pomona college](#) I think building partnerships with different kinds of institutions, like Pomona and Compton College, will build a more equitable future, because we all will bring to the table new ideas and new passions. 5/5

[@lamkeithcurry](#) [@compton\\_college](#) and [@pomona college](#) teams have been meeting to create a unique partnership centered around students. Special thanks to [@Lande\\_Ajose](#) [@MonicaCLozano](#) for putting Dr. Starr and [@lamkeithcurry](#) on a taskforce together.

[@pomona college](#) I think this is a natural partnership. We are in the heart of Los Angeles, and are pulling together for the future of California.

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q4. Dr. Starr, [@pomona college](#) . How have [@pomona college](#) adjusted due to COVID-19? Post COVID-19, how can [@pomona college](#) improve to serve the most vulnerable student population? #EquityChat [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@pomona college](#) We pivoted to fully remote on March 13, 2020. We are fortunate to have significant financial resources. We dipped into our reserves and spent funds to get technology to every student (a computer and an internet hub) around the world who needed it. 1/4

[@pomona college](#) We increased financial aid to cover funds students might have been able to earn by working in a normal year. 2/4

[@pomona college](#) We raised money to send instruments to our music students, samples to our geologists, reagents to our chemists, materials to our artists. 3/4

[@pomona college](#) Now we have to get L.A. County students back on campus, so that everyone has a stable place to learn. That's key to equity. [@LACountyBOS](#)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q5. How has [@pomona college](#) engaged in anti-racism work? How do you engage and prioritize the student voice [@pomona college](#) in anti-racism work? #EquityChat [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@pomona college](#) By dismantling some of the racist assumptions that can haunt learning. For example, some physics classes begin with ancient Greeks, as if no culture beyond the Mediterranean ever discovered anything about the stars, fluid dynamics, light, or matter. 1/3

[@pomona college](#) [@pomona college](#) professors work with students to explore discoveries made in the ancient worlds of Central America, the Great Plains, Africa & the Middle East. This helps students understand physics & discovery are in the reach of all human beings, not just some. 2/3

[@pomona college](#) We also believe it is important that students have a voice in departments (in hiring faculty, for example), in designing student experiences so that they are meaningful for everyone, & in helping identify the legacies of racism we see so we can work together to solve them. 3/3

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q6. Dr. Starr, [@pomona college](#) .What three recommendations would you provided to the Biden Administration about the challenges higher education institutions are faced with at this time? [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@pomona college](#) And because I need one more—don't penalize private institutions that do the things that state institutions can't, but enable us to spend the funds we have raised for financial aid and student success freely. 4/4

[@SDMesaPrez](#) I'd love to dig in to this one a little more..

[@pomona college](#) As part of tax reform, Congress passed a tax on institutions with large ratios of endowment per student. That hits institutions like Pomona right at the heart of what we do.

[@pomona college](#) We were proud to spend \$51.5MM on grant financial aid to students this year; and not to package loans. it could have been nearly 2MM more. [@ACEducation](#) [@aicucal](#)

[@pomona college](#) It has to begin in K-12. The assessment industry serves primarily to continue to preserve the need for assessment. Give teachers and schools the ability to make site-based choices to best serve the needs of their students. One size will never fit all. ¼



[@pomonaCollege](#) Enhance regionally focused public institutions so that they can serve the students who need it most—colleges know our back yards. Enhance opportunities for transfer from 2- to 4-year colleges. 2/4

[@pomonaCollege](#) Support students through increased, interest-free, funding for basic needs--nutrition, shelter, technology, textbooks, dependent care—so that they can pursue their educations first. 3/4

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q7. Dr Starr [@pomonaCollege](#) What gives you hope? #EquityChat [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@pomonaCollege](#) My [@pomonaCollege](#) students. They just won't give up on learning, and learning to listen and lead. This generation is not afraid.

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q8. Dr. Starr, [@pomonaCollege](#) . What are you reading? And what book(s) would you recommend we consider reading? #EquityChat [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@pomonaCollege](#) Let's keep the equity actions going!

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Thank you so much!!!

[@pomonaCollege](#) Creating Wicked Students, Paul Hanstedt. Sources of Holocaust Insight, John Roth. The Perils of Complacency, AAAS & the Baker Institute [@RiceUniversity](#). Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education, 2020 supplement, ACE. [@ACEducation](#) [@americanacad](#)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) TY so much [@pomonaCollege](#) President Dr Gabrielle Starr for joining us on #EquityChat tonight. We learned so much about you and your beautiful institution. Next wk we're joined by [@PrincipalRahh](#) Join us! [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@CollegeFutures](#) #EquityAvengersOut