April 7, 2021 #EquityChat
Dr. Gary K. Michelson (@Michelson20MM),
Founder & Co-Chair of The Michelson 20MM Foundation (@Michelson20MM)

@SDMesaPrez It's Wednesday and time for #EquityChat with your @equityavengers @Iamkeithcurry & @SDMesaPrez !
Tonight we are joined by @Michelson20MM Founder and Co-chair #DrGaryKMicheldon Welcome!!!
@Michelson20MM Looking forward to our conversation, @SDMesaPrez and @Iamkeithcurry! #EquityChat

@SDMesaPrez Q1. @Michelson20MM 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 @CollegeFutures @Iamkeithcurry
@Michelson20MM (1/3) @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez, when I was a very young boy growing up in Philadelphia, I was at grandmother's home for lunch and suddenly smelled something terrible. I looked up to see that her hand was on fire and the flames were going up her arm. #EquityChat
@Michelson20MM (2) She had a spinal disease that caused insensitivity to pain and temperature--she simply did not feel the fire licking her fingers; it was terrifying. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat
@Michelson20MM (3) Something that she said in that moment shaped my life path: "One day, you'll become a doctor, and you will fix me." So I left home when I was 17 and worked two jobs at a time to put myself through college and medical school. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

> @SDMesaPrez I often share with my @SDSU_CCLead students that messages we receive early on in life, and reinforced by those that observe us can be powerful motivators to empower our dreams.
> @saragoldrickrab Wow. Dr. Michelson you were a #RealCollege student motivated by family the way so many others are. I have wonderful students like you @TempleUniv now. You're an inspiration.
>> @Michelson20MM Thank you, @saragoldrickrab! Your work on student basic needs and equity has a tremendous impact on the lives of countless students.
>> @saragoldrickrab Very kind of you. Teamwork @hope4college makes the dream work ❤️

@Iamkeithcurry Q2. @Michelson20MM. Tell us about @Michelson20MM and your work with @Michelson20MM. #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @Michelson20MM @CollegeFutures
@Michelson20MM (1) @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez, 20MM was launched a decade ago when I read a news article about local community college students dropping out due to the cost of textbooks. We were able to immediately help those students but needed to address the issue at scale. #EquityChat
@Michelson20MM (2) We provided a catalytic grant to @OpenStax to create the world's first commercial grade, openly licensed textbook publisher. We also invested in mission-aligned, for-profit startups that improve student retention, career training, etc. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat
@Michelson20MM (3) We now also have dedicated programs in intellectual property education, opportunities for incarcerated students, student basic needs, and the digital divide. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat
@Michelson20MM (4) At @Michelson20MM, we listen with an open heart and strive to create more inclusive and equitable communities. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@SDMesaPrez Q3. @Michelson20MM What is your definition of equity? How is equity-minded practice embedded in your work? #EquityChat @Iamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures
@Michelson20MM (1) @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez, to me, equity means that everyone has an equal opportunity to achieve their goals regardless of their zip code. #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM ([2](#)) Today, your zip code – especially if you are a person of color – determines your socioeconomic well-being, health, and educational attainment. That shouldn't be the case. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (3) 20MM seeks to help people live up to their potential, regardless of circumstances. Take our IP work – there are huge opportunity gaps in the space, which are reflected in the percentage of patents issued to women and people of color. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (4) According to @InnovationAlli, people of color and low-income individuals apply for and hold far fewer patents than white males, which is contributing to an imbalance in entrepreneurial and startup success rates. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (5) Increasing IP education among underrepresented groups is critical to facilitate their participation in the system. That's a priority area for us, and we're working with a number of partners and collaborators on this issue. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

> @SDMesaPrez This completely vibes with decades of #highered privilege in terms of race & gender. So glad our sectors are syncing up to take this on #EquityChat

@Iamkeithcurry Q4. @Michelson20MM. Can you share with us your policy priorities and why they are all so important?#EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @Michelson20MM @CollegeFutures

@Michelson20MM (1) @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez, I think the government should invest more in open educational resources. We provided the initial seed funding to prove that #OER can make a difference for students--@OpenStax has saved students $1.2B to date. #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (2) I hope CA will fund faculty produced #OER content for all AA degrees in community college or the first two years of a four year BA program. Then, all $2.8M students in the CA higher ed programs will spend $0 textbooks for two years. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (3) Another policy concern is the rise of automatic textbook billing programs in higher ed. From the 70s until the mid-2010s, textbook prices increased at 3x the rate of inflation and have only just leveled off. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (4) The recent leveling off in costs is due to the diversified ways of buying textbooks including more online sellers, rentals, OER, and used textbooks. Publishers shifted their model from physical books to focusing on digital rentals. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (5) These digital products are also known as access codes. Access codes cannot be shared between students, found in the campus library, bought used, or kept for future classes. They are used for one or two terms, and then expire. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (6) Over the past few years publishers and booksellers have begun to market access codes through bulk purchasing deals called inclusive, equitable, or first day access, where students are automatically billed for a "discounted" price. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityC

@Michelson20MM (7) Auto billing deals are hailed by publishers as the solution for the affordability crisis they created. These deals, however, have troubling trends including uncapped price increases, as outlined by a @uspirg report @Michelson20MM funded. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (8) @uspirg's first of its kind report, "Automatic Textbook Billing: An Offer Students Can't Refuse?" is available here: https://uspirg.org/feature/usp/automatic-textbook-billing @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (9) When colleges and universities lock themselves into restrictive deals with outside corporations, strong consumer protections are needed to protect institutions, faculty, and especially students. Policy protections are needed. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (10) Regarding our criminal justice system, policymakers should make it easier for people with criminal records to find housing. Over 95% of those incarcerated will return home, we should not deter their successful reentry. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (11) The final policy priority I'll mention is ensuring that students who are incarcerated are guaranteed access to face-to-face college instruction post-COVID. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (12) While technology can benefit students in prison, we need to ensure that it enhances in-person education rather than replacing it. Research indicates that incarcerated students benefit tremendously from face-to-face instruction. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM (13) Face-to-face learning develops critical thinking skills and builds prosocial relationships that foster success post incarceration. Policymakers should do everything they can to ensure these students have access to this. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@SDMesaPrez Q5. @Michelson20MM In higher education, we have many conversations about student affordability. How does Online Educational Resources for students address student affordability? #EquityChat @Iamkeithcurry

@Michelson20MM (1) @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez, @uspirg released a report on the impact of textbook prices on students. They found 65% of students skipped buying a textbook due to cost. 82% of students who reported missing a meal due to the pandemic also didn't buy textbooks. #EquityChat

> @Michelson20MM (2) That report by @uspirg, Fixing the Broken Textbook Market, Third Edition, can be found here: https://uspirg.org/reports/usp/fixing-broken-textbook-market-third-edition @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

> @Michelson20MM (3) #OER can solve this aspect of the college affordability crisis! Openly licensed and free textbooks help students succeed in the classroom with one less financial burden in their educational journey. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

> @Michelson20MM (4) #OER is an equity gamechanger. It can create a more equitable educational system by lowering the financial barrier of instructional materials. A @UGA study saw a >12% increase in grades for Pell grant eligible students thanks to OER. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

> @Michelson20MM (5) Beyond affordability, since faculty can easily modify #OER content they are able to create a more culturally responsive learning environment for students. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@DeniseVoiedeVie And this assumes students have the technology/infrastructure available to them to access OER.

@deezgrl What is student affordability??

@Iamkeithcurry Q6. @Michelson20MM made an #impactinvestment to enhance equity in emergency student aid management and distribution. Can you tell us why this is important for students? #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @Michelson20MM @CollegeFutures

@Michelson20MM (1) @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez, there are millions of federal aid dollars coming to @CalCommColleges. Half of those dollars must be given directly to students, but we haven't had an efficient way of doing so. Our portfolio company @Edquity solves that problem. #EquityChat

> @Michelson20MM (2) @Edquity helped @compton_college students request funds in under 8 minutes, obtain a decision in 16 hours, and receive money within 18 hours. Students who received funds graduated at 2x the rate as those who didn't. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

> > @Michelson20MM (3) @Edquity represents progress from antiquated processes that are slow to respond to student needs, require students perform their poverty, and perpetuate biases that impede students ability to graduate. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

> > @JudithK14292802 Wow!

@equityhghered Do you know why @edquity is suspended on Twitter?
@Iamkeithcurry @edquityapp
@JudithK14292802 Makes sense

@SDMesaPrez Q7. @Michelson20MM Can you share more about @Michelson20MM's #SmartJustice Initiative (SJI) and its link to equity? @Iamkeithcurry #EquityChat @CollegeFutures
@Michelson20MM (1) @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez, the negative effects of mass incarceration in communities of color are well documented. Our SJI approach looks to right the wrongs of the "tough on crime" era and invest in the power of higher ed. #EquityChat
@Michelson20MM (2) Through SJI we seek to transform the lives of individuals and communities disproportionately impacted by our country's punitive legal system to forge brighter, more prosperous futures. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat
@Michelson20MM (3) As @RomarilynR from Project Rebound shared during our last smart justice event, "There's no other reentry model that can produce what higher education does." @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat
@Michelson20MM (4) Knowing this, we leverage post-secondary education as a catalytic force to transform the lives of justice involved individuals while also working to reform the system itself, which is long overdue. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat
@Michelson20MM (5) In a recent 20MM funded report, @CollegeOpp and @EseSkolar said, "ensuring college opportunity for these students is part of our state's obligation to racial justice," which I could not agree with more. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@Iamkeithcurry Q8. @Michelson20MM. What gives you hope? #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @Michelson20MM @CollegeFutures
@Michelson20MM (1) @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez, daunting but doable, is still doable. We have already touched on a number of our areas of involvement. 20MM is making education more affordable, accessible, and effective. We are focused on criminal justice reform. #EquityChat
@SDMesaPrez ❤️ this...daunting but doable, is still doable
@Michelson20MM (2) We are making an understanding of Intellectual Property and entrepreneurship available to a far broader and more diverse audience. For each of these, we are now moving forward with the wind at our backs and on a rising tide. @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

@SDMesaPrez Q9. @Michelson20MM What are you reading? And what book(s) would you recommend we consider reading? #EquityChat @Iamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures
@Michelson20MM @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez, the last two best reads have been @TheDesmondTutu's Book of Forgiving, and @willmacaskill's Doing Good Better. #EquityChat

@Michelson20MM Thank you, @SDMesaPrez and @Iamkeithcurry, for hosting the #EquityChat! It was an honor to participate in such an important conversation. Thank you also for the work you do!
@SDMesaPrez ❤️