

June 23, 2021 #EquityChat

Stephen Kodur,

President (@SSCCC_OFFICIAL),

Colm Fitzgerald,

Student Representative (@CalCommColleges Board of Governors, @SSCCC_OFFICIAL)

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Welcome to #EquityChat sponsored by @CollegeFutures, and I am riding solo this evening, I am excited to welcome @SSCCC_OFFICIAL student leaders @stephlikecurry and Colm Fitzgerald @CalCommColleges Board of Gov. #EquityChat

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) Yes, thanks for having us! Ready to get this party started!

[@stephlikecurry](#) Happy to be here, thanks for having us! For the rest of the night, I will be using the @SSCCC_OFFICIAL twitter handle along with Colm.

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q1. @SSCCC_OFFICIAL. 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 @CollegeFutures

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) A1, COLM: (1/2) The biggest reason I am able to speak publicly is due to my time in theater class. I loved performing comedy scenes and monologues. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) A2, COLM: (2/2) At first I thought I loved making people laugh, and realized later that I just loved making people happier, especially when they were down @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) A1, STEPHEN: (1/2) I was born and raised in the Bay Area, in a religious household, and have a background in sports and theater. I was even homeschooled through most of high school. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) A1, STEPHEN: (2/2) I am the oldest of 5 kids and a first gen college student until this past year when I had the awesome privilege of registering my mother for @CalCommColleges @reedleycollege Go Tigers! @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q2. @SSCCC_OFFICIAL. What is your definition of equity? How is equity-minded practice embedded in your work? #EquityChat @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @CollegeFutures

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) A2, COLM: (1/3) Equity is the equality of opportunity with a focus on those who, for whatever reason, have had the gates of opportunity narrowed or closed to them. In all policy work, for the benefit of us all, @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) A2, COLM: (2/3) it is imperative we not forget those among us who are too often left behind. When all of us contribute to this nation's governance, only then will this nation work for all of us. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) A2, COLM: (3/3) Equity-minded approaches for all policy and advocacy movements are thus not only important- but imperative. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) A2, STEPHEN: (1/3) Equity is the leveling of the playing field. Too often groups of individuals are underrepresented, under resourced, and ultimately underprivileged. A lot of the time it is our BIPOC population.

@lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) A2, STEPHEN: (2/3) They don't receive adequate resources to succeed or existing policies act as barriers instead of being helpful. Equity is being intentional with resources and policies [@lamkeithcurry](#)

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[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A2, STEPHEN: (3/3) to ensure that those individuals have the same opportunity and don't have to work twice as hard to get half as far [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q3. [@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#). You were involved w/[@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) from the start of your college exp, leading to your appointment to [@CalCommColleges](#) Board of Gov. What has been your proudest achievement as a student leader? #EquityChat [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A3, COLM: (1/2) As a story teller, and writer, my proudest moment was being able to talk to the Board of Governors about my close friend Jarrod Vargas, who is the sole reason I was given a voice in student leadership. [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A3, COLM: (2/2) Jarrod's story is incredible. His story inspired the Board of Governors to adopt a resolution which I coauthored on supporting Basic Needs. So thank you Jarrod and thank you [@CalCommColleges](#) BoG! [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q4. [@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#). You stepped into your role as [@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#) President in the midst of the pandemic. What were the biggest challenges you faced, and what has been your proudest achievement serving as President?#EquityChat [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A4, STEPHEN: (1/4) Some of the biggest challenges during this time was getting consistent student participation when so many experienced zoom fatigue and we were missing personal interaction like connecting on campus. [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A4, STEPHEN: (2/4) We were forced to advocate through email and online meetings which was difficult. As President of [@SSCCC_Official](#), I am proud of a lot of things that our student leaders helped our organization accomplish. [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A4, STEPHEN: (3/4) We led the charge of racial equity in our system with our Anti-Racism: A Student Plan of Action that was integral in the DEI implementation work. Also, our General Assembly was held online [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A4, STEPHEN: (4/4) This removed a lot of barriers for our students which gave us our largest representation of colleges with 94 of 115 participating. [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q5. [@SSCCC_OFFICIAL](#). Why do you feel financial aid reform and passing #AB1456 is such an important step for supporting our students? #EquityChat [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A5, COLM: (1/3) Too many of our students spend ridiculous amounts of money on gas, housing, textbooks, etc, none of which are covered under our current financial aid system. The true cost of attending a [@CalCommColleges](#) is immense. [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A5, COLM: (2/3) Sometimes more than a CSU or UC, a sad fact when thinking about the huge population of disproportionately impacted students our system is supposed to serve. [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A5, COLM: (3/3) Fixing our financial aid to cover the true cost of college in our system means widening opportunity for those who need it the most, ensuring a more prepared future California, and a more empowered future United States. [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A5, STEPHEN: (1/3) Financial Aid reform needs to be done to make it more equitable. CCC students have the lowest percentage of students receiving Cal Grant, FA reform would allow us to serve more students. [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A5, STEPHEN: (2/3) In addition, we need to remove some of the barriers that prohibit some of our underprivileged students from receiving aid like time out of HS and GPA requirements. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A5, STEPHEN: (3/3) Even though we have the lowest tuition cost of the 3 higher education institutions, studies show it costs our students more to attend because of the true cost of college like text books, transportation, housing, etc. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q6. @SSCCC_OFFICIAL. What gives you hope? #EquityChat @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @CollegeFutures

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A6, COLM: (1/2) The unity and perseverance I witnessed during my last year as a member of the BoG, in the midst of a global pandemic, a racial reckoning, violent fires, blackouts: young people still found the courage to rise up & demand change. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A6, COLM: (2/2) As will always be- our future is bright. We are but a speck on an arch bent toward justice. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A6, STEPHEN: (1/3) There are many things that give me hope but I would like to say that our rising student leaders and the focus of the system to empower their voice is the most important. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A6, STEPHEN: (2/3) seeing the resiliency and perseverance that so many student leaders exhibited this year gives me pride that I am leaving the system in good hands @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A6, STEPHEN: (3/3) The students will continue to push issues that are critical to their success and I have seen us rally so many allies within the system this year that I know together we can accomplish big things. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q7. @SSCCC_OFFICIAL. How would you encourage other students to become involved with [@SSCCC](#) or other student leadership roles? How can we support students who want to become involved? #EquityChat @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @CollegeFutures

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A7, COLM: (1/4) First, it's important to say that everyone is a leader. To become a great leader, one need only the tools and training. There are so many ways to get the tools and training, and the SSCCC is a great place to start. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A7, COLM: (2/4) Speak to the issues you care about. Your voice is powerful, no matter who you are. Use it! I did this at Delta College when they had closed the cafeteria and I advocated to reopen it to address the Basic Needs of our students @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A7 COLM: (3/4) The second part of the question is more straightforward, in terms of encouraging student leaders. Pay them! Too many students do too much thankless work for free. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A7, COLM; (4/4) Students in all levels of governance must be compensated equitably for their work, which only serves to better our colleges. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A7 STEPHEN: (1/4) The @SSCCC_Official is taking strides and being intentional about getting more students involved. One of the biggest things is to provide our students with resources so they can participate. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A7 STEPHEN: (2/4) Our organization will begin to pay student leaders to participate in governance committees (something our colleges should consider since students are the only individuals not being compensated to participate in committees on campus). @lamkeithcurry #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A7 STEPHEN: (3/4) SSCCC is hiring a staff member to go to campuses to rally students around causes and to boost participation. Lastly, we need help from our faculty counterparts because as student leaders it is nearly impossible for us to be in every avenue on campus #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A7 STEPHEN: (4/4) Being a student leader and a part of the SSCCC is a rewarding experience. I have learned so much and cannot say enough good things about the organization and what it can do for not just yourself but the 2.1 million students in our system. #EquityChat

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q8. @SSCCC_OFFICIAL. What are you reading? And what book(s) would you recommend we consider reading?#EquityChat @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPez @CollegeFutures

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A8, COLM: I try to cycle between fiction and non-fiction. My current fiction is The Remains of the Day. Brilliant so far. No spoilers. My next book, non-fiction, is The Great Dissenter. Excited to read about John Marshall and his impact. @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A8, STEPHEN: (1/2) Being that classes have just finished for me, I have not wanted to pick up or even see another book for awhile lol @lamkeithcurry @SDMesaPez #EquityChat

[@SSCCC OFFICIAL](#) A8, STEPHEN: (2/2) However, when I do start reading again, I have always had a fascination with self-help leadership books. Next on my reading list are Wooden on Leadership, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, and How to Win Friends and Influence People. #EquityChat

[@lamkeithcurry](#) TY Stephen Kodur & Colm Fitzgerald @SSCCC_OFFICIAL for joining us on #EquityChat – We wish you the best in your future endeavors! Next week, we welcome our newest member #EquityAvengers Project Manager @carmelnikki! @SDMesaPez @equityavengers OUT!

[@carmelnikki](#) What a tough act to follow! Students like Stephen & Colm are what give us hope. So great to hear from students as they are a necessary voice in the equity conversation! #EquityChat