

September 16, 2020 #EquityChat

Dr. Amber GarrisonDuncan (@amberagd),
Strategy Director, Lumina Foundation (@LuminaFound)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Welcome to [#EquityChat](#) with your hosts [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) Our guest tonight is [@amberagd](#), and we will be talking about [@LuminaFound](#) new strategic plan and [#equity](#). Welcome Dr Garrison Duncan!

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q1. [@amberagd](#) 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](#)

[@amberagd](#) Non-resume Amber is someone that grew up in rural small town Texas. My family is both blood & by choice. I'm the oldest of 4 siblings. I was the only one that "flew the coop" and have lived in 4 different states. [#equitychat](#) [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#) (1/x)

[@amberagd](#) I love to travel to new places, learn new things, and constantly on the go. I love to be a catalyst for change for social good and feel that is my life's work. [#equitychat](#) [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#) (2/x)

[@iamkeithcurry](#) Q2. [@amberagd](#). Tell us about [@LuminaFound](#)? And your position with [@LuminaFound](#)? [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@iamkeithcurry](#) [#EquityChat](#)

[@amberagd](#) [@LuminaFound](#) is the nation's largest foundation focused solely on higher education attainment and racial equity. [#equitychat](#) [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#)

[@AdrianaMaestas](#) Have a Q about this -- I have heard your CEO speak & he's compelling, but why do we need private foundations in this arena? A lot of ppl have grown skeptical of foundations & nonprofits b/c they have an interest in the 'problem' continuing. [#EquityChat](#)

[@amberagd](#) But we also need communities to hold us accountable to those goals and call us out if we are not doing our part. [#equitychat](#)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) My experience is that [@LuminaFound](#) gets troped for being very "corporate" driven in its expectations...w/racial equity at the core-what's the counter narrative to that?

[@amberagd](#) We are unapologetic about our commitment to racial equity. We expect this of ourselves & our partners. We also know we aren't perfect, so we all have room to grow. Progress is key. [#equitychat](#)

[@amberagd](#) Our entire mission is to give money to orgs that can solve for some of our greatest issues. Foundation missions will evolve or they can spend down if the issue is eliminated. [#equitychat](#)

[@amberagd](#) Great question & imp't question. We see our role in philanthropy as being able to support, elevate & amplify. [#equitychat](#)

[@AdrianaMaestas](#) I get that there are certain obstacles to achieving your stated goals in the existing system, but I also wonder about the capacity building outside of orgs to advocate for racial equity & post secondary credential attainment. Thank you for answering. [#equitychat](#)

[@amberagd](#) YES! Absolutely, capacity building outside of orgs in the existing system is key. We absolutely see it as something we can and should do. [#equitychat](#)

[@amberagd](#) My colleague [@dakotapawlicki](#) leads our Talent Hubs work that does exactly that. [#equitychat](#)

[@dakotapawlicki](#) Investing in and leveraging cross-sector partnerships that ARE the community (not just representative of) to alter, support, and keep systems and institutions accountable is a key element to our strategy.

[@dakotapawlicki](#) And have some good examples of work where we've done just that. A comprehensive approach to equity applies to partner selection as much as the outcomes we care about.

[@amberagd](#) In 2008, based on research about what Americans would need to thrive, we knew that 60% of our workforce will need a high quality credential. So we set that as our mission and haven't looked back. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound (2/x)

[@amberagd](#) Meaning just like institutions, we establish a strategic plan, assign work, and leverage every tool in our toolbox to meet the goal. We also monitor progress of the grants and contracts to know if we on track. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q3. @amberagd What is your definition of equity? How is equity-minded practice embedded in your work? #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry

[@amberagd](#) I seek to embed racial equity in all of my work at Lumina. This means externally as well as how we function as an organization. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@amberagd](#) This means explicitly supporting work that focuses on race, using culturally sustaining practices, dismantling racist and anti-black policies and practices. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @luminafound

[@amberagd](#) This also means knowing that as a white woman, I still have much to learn and unlearn. I must constantly engage in a process to know better & do better. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@amberagd](#) My definition of equity is that every person has what they need to succeed by design, not by hope. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound (1/x)

[@ahandsintheair](#) "by design, not by hope" I like that!

[@iamkeithcurry](#) Q4. @amberagd. Can you share with us how @LuminaFound is committed to racial equity and educational quality? @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez #EquityChat

[@amberagd](#) When you examine the national and state level data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, you can see that our current system is not equitable. <https://luminafoundation.org/stronger-nation/report/2020/#nation...> #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound (1/x)

[@amberagd](#) These gaps in attainment between white people & Black, Latino, and Native Americans are the result of a system with a history of educational segregation and discrimination. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound (2/x)

[@amberagd](#) Achieving fair and just outcomes for people of color must be the mission of higher education and the focus of all of our work. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@amberagd](#) We know people of color and their families have been fighting for the right to equitable higher education for centuries. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@amberagd](#) We take an equity first approach to all our work. For @luminafound, equity will be achieved when outcomes cannot be predicted by race/ethnicity and that justice will be achieved when the root causes of inequities are eliminated. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q5. [@amberagd](#) Yesterday, [@LuminaFound](#) released the Lumina 2020 Strategic Plan, which outlined how [@LuminaFound](#) will be organized to achieve three outcomes. Please share the three outcomes and how community colleges can assist in reaching these outcomes. #EquityChat [@iamkeithcurry](#)

[@amberagd](#) How do we get there? We need to move from 51.3% to 60% over the next 4 years. There are 3 outcomes for adults of color: 2.6M more short term credentials, 3.3M more associates, & 1M more bachelors. #equitychat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) We will be bringing legislation again to expand [@CalCommColleges](#) #baccalaureatedegrees led by [@AsmJoseMedina](#) this next year, these programs are #equitable #livingwage & #workforce driven -would love to work with you on lifting this up...

[@amberagd](#) YES! This is an excellent example and should be lifted up. #equitychat

[@amberagd](#) Yes! The last strategic plan before 2025. We are calling it the "closing argument" and a way to catalyze the nation to reach the goal of ensuring at least 60% of the nation's residents have a postsecondary credential. #equitychat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#)

[@amberagd](#) Community colleges are ESSENTIAL to reaching Goal 2025. We cannot do it without them. #equitychat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#)

[@amberagd](#) Community colleges can do what they do best. Serve adults of color, scale up student success strategies, and ensure credentials are aligned with employment. #equitychat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#)

[@amberagd](#) Also, in this time of social uprising & health pandemic, continue to be a center of community. Many rely on you for leadership, education & support during these critical times. #equitychat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#)

[@iamkeithcurry](#) Q6. [@amberagd](#). Why are short-term credentials such as quality certificates and certifications a valuable stepping stone on the path to other learning and work opportunities for adult learners? [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@iamkeithcurry](#) #EquityChat

[@amberagd](#) High quality short-term credentials can lead to middle class jobs and family sustaining wages. Certificates are the fastest growing postsecondary credentials because they are often aligned directly with employer needs. #equitychat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) So true, especially right now as the workforce is in such flux.

[@amberagd](#) But your use of stepping-stone is important. We know for continued economic mobility, these credentials must stack into degrees. #equitychat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#)

[@AdrianaMaestas](#) #equitychat -- do you think that there will be more 'testing out' or programs that could string together some of the quick credentials or certificates combined with work experience to convert to credit for degrees? W/ the pandemic, this flexibility might be helpful.

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Absolutely-credit for prior learning, and streamlined curriculum approval would help!

[@amberagd](#) We are also seeing what I like to call flipped curriculum. Placing technical/applied skills earlier & gen eds later. Allows credit for workbased skills & just on time learning for adults. #equitychat

[@iamkeithcurry](#) We need to make sure our cooperative work experience plans are in alignment with this. #equityChat

[@AdrianaMaestas](#) I have always wondered why this wasn't encouraged. So many young ppl could earn a credential and then work and take classes leading to a degree and take time to really figure out what they want to do. I say this as someone who completed undergrad in 3 years. #equitychat

[@amberagd](#) Agree. We need institutions to honor giving people credit for these credentials and make the opportunity real. #equitychat

[@amberagd](#) @chrisnellum of @EdTrustWest is launching #CaliforniansDeserveCredit on 9/29 to discuss the growing movement to simplify pathways to degrees, credentials, and certificates. <http://californiansdeservecredit.org/register> #equitychat

[@amberagd](#) Increasing capacity to recognize skills and credentials gained in work experience does improve completion. Students 4x more likely to complete if given credit for prior learning. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@amberagd](#) We are currently supporting @SkillsCoalition & @edstrategygroup to help states/institutions adopt common criteria for quality short term credentials. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@iamkeithcurry](#) Follow-up. How can we provide professional development to community colleges CEOs to support short term credentials? @SkillsCoalition @edstrategygroup @SDMesaPrez @iamkeithcurry #EquityChat

[@amberagd](#) Topics: Increase data capacity & access to real time labor market data. Effective employer partnerships. Monitoring pathways for equity/tracking. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

QT @daisygonzales This right here! 📌 #equitychat

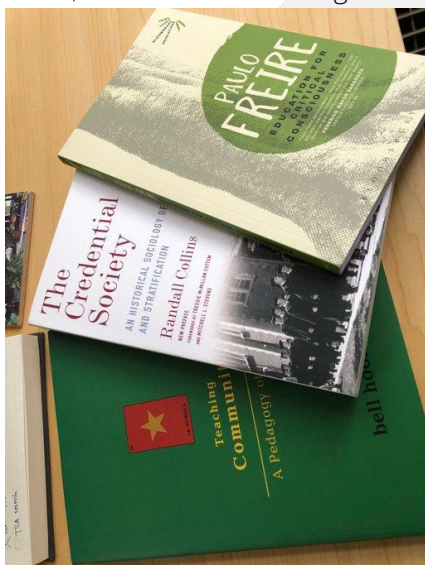
<https://twitter.com/amberagd/status/1306395913838047233?s=20>

[@amberagd](#) With these criteria states/institutions are creating economic mobility. Example, Virginia FastForward and G3 program ensure short term credential is on ramp to associates degree. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@amberagd](#) These criteria include labor market demand, employer hiring, wages & stackability. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

[@SDMesaPrez](#) And our guests and followers favorite Q7. @amberagd What are you reading? And what book(s) would you recommend we consider reading? #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry

[@amberagd](#) Right now I am re-reading Teaching Community bell hooks, Education for Critical Consciousness Paulo Freire, and The Credentialing Society by Randall Collins. #equitychat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @LuminaFound

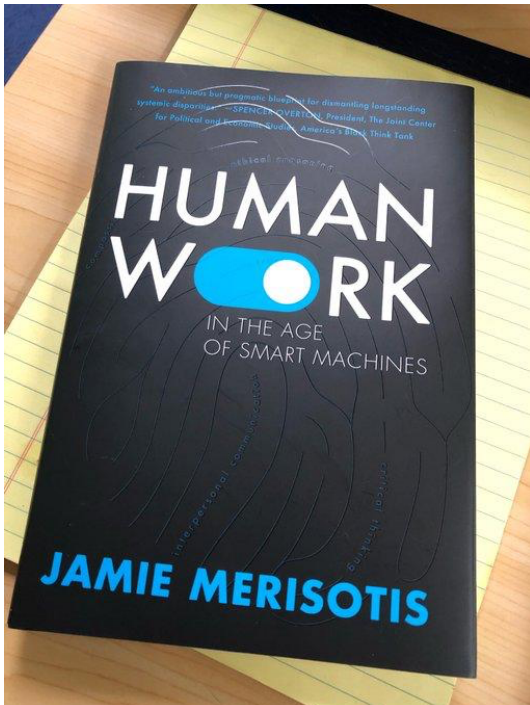


[@SDMesaPrez](#) Love it when people post pictures of their books!

[@amberagd](#) I learned that from [@daisygonzales](#)! #equitychat

[@amberagd](#) Love this question and have enjoyed seeing what previous guests have posted. #equitychat [@iamkeithcurry](#)
[@SDMesaPrez](#) [@LuminaFound](#)

[@amberagd](#) And, of course, our CEO [@jamiemerisotis](#)'s new book called Human Work!



[@SDMesaPrez](#) Thank you so much [@amberagd](#)! We hope you've had fun w/ us and we've learned so much about [@LuminaFound](#) commitment to #equity-join us next week when we host [@EvccPrez](#)! #equityavengersout