

November 17, 2021 #EquityChat

Rachel Sumekh (@RachelSumekh), CEO of Swipe Out Hunger (@SwipeHunger)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Welcome back to #EquityChat sponsored by @CollegeFutures and hosted by @SDMesaPrez & @lamkeithcurry. It's Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week, and we're honored to have @RachelSumekh, Founder & CEO of @SwipeHunger, joining us today. Welcome Rachel!

[@RachelSumekh](#) *puts on avengers superhero cape* I'm so excited and honored to be joining you both and the #EquityChat community for this timely conversation. @lamkeithcurry

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q1 @RachelSumekh. Our education, background, and experiences make us who we are. What are three things that we should know about you? @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[@RachelSumekh](#) I entered my 30th year of life last week, I'm the daughter of Iranian Jewish immigrants and a proud UCLA grad. Go, Bruins!

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

[@RachelSumekh](#) Society claims that higher education is the ultimate meritocracy but in too many classrooms students are living completely different lives. As advocates, we can level the field. To me, equity is ensuring no student has to choose between food and their degree.

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q3 @RachelSumekh. Tell us about @SwipeHunger and your role in this organization. @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[@RachelSumekh](#) .@SwipeHunger is the leading national org committed to ending student hunger. I started Swipe with a group of friends at @UCLA when we saw the inequity of food security. Now, 11 years later, I serve as the CEO of this incredible movement that spans 300+ campuses in 49 states

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q4 @RachelSumekh. Sadly, food insecurity isn't new for many students but has been exacerbated by the pandemic. How has @SwipeHunger adapted their support to campuses during campus closures and now that campuses are reopening? @SDMesaPrez @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[@RachelSumekh](#) We know we aren't going to "swipe" our way out of hunger-- so in addition to the #HungerFreeCampus bill that I wrote in 2017 and has grown across the US, we joined forces with CUFBA, bringing the wealth of knowledge about campus pantries to 800+ campuses all under our roof!

[@RachelSumekh](#) Campuses interested in accessing toolkits and support resources to address hunger (and applying for a microgrant from our \$100k fund!) can join our network of fellow basic needs advocates here

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q5 @RachelSumekh. What are some innovative programs or solutions you've seen campuses implement to address student hunger? @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[@RachelSumekh](#) We were really excited at @swipehunger to relaunch a peer-to-peer program at @CUNY where students support other students in enrolling in SNAP. In the first 6 months, our student navigators supported 1,500+ CUNY students find community resources to address hunger! Peer to peer ❤️

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Love #peersupport we have @SDMesaCalFresh @sdmesathestand ambassadors @sdmesacollege

[@RachelSumekh](#) We also have an online Reddit forum for our campus network called The Feed which is chock-full of innovative hunger programs from our community. DM me if you're a campus that'd like to join!

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Great idea count @sdmesacollege in

[@DeniseVoiedeVie](#) Also know that if those benefits are denied, they can get (student) counsel through the law school to fight it. I have worked that clinic, and we helped many students get benefits that were incorrectly denied.

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q6 @RachelSumekh. As we see campuses reopening, how can we keep the momentum for addressing student hunger and supporting our students on our campuses? @SDMesaPrez @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[@RachelSumekh](#) Keep talking about student basic needs! There has never been a more important time to speak up. People can join our movement by signing on to action campaigns at <https://t.co/T2o3Zzk4IX>

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

[@RachelSumekh](#) I find hope from @SwipeHunger students. Looking back at our progress since 2010. The sun rising each morning. The moral arc of the universe bending towards justice. Diverse coalitions working together. Ways that I've learned to be a better leader. Many things give me hope.

[@JumperAthletics](#) This is beautiful. ❤️

[@lamkeithcurry](#) Q8 @RachelSumekh. What are you currently reading and what book(s) should we consider reading?

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[@RachelSumekh](#) I'm currently reading through Patrisse Cullors' @blkivesmatter memoir and I'm always rereading/relistening to @RyanHoliday's books like Ego is the Enemy and Stillness is the Key which I recommend to every leader.

[@SDMesaPrez](#) TY @RachelSumekh @SwipeHunger for sharing your insights w/us today. Next week, we're re-sharing our chat w/Chancellor @JosephICastro for #BestOfEquityChat with new guests after the holidays to close out the year. Until next time, @SDMesaPrez @lamkeithcurry @equityavengers O