

Dr. Lennor Johnson
Superintendent/President
Imperial Valley College
May 17, 2023

[5:00 pm] Pam

Welcome to [#EquityChat](#) sponsored by [@CollegeFutures](#) w/ your [@equityavengers](#) hosts [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@DrTammeil](#) & [@DrPamLuster](#) - our guest tonight is [@ivcpres_lmj](#) talking about [@ivcollege](#) 2023 [#AspenPrize](#) [@AspenInstitute](#)
Welcome Dr Johnson!

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres_lmj·3m](#)

Replying to [@DrPamLuster](#) [@CollegeFutures](#) and 5 others

Glad to be here!

[5:03 pm] Tammeil

Q1 [@ivcpres_lmj](#). What is your walk-up song or anthem as you engage in equity-focused work? [@ivcollege](#) [@DrPamLuster](#) [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@CollegeFutures](#) [@EquityAvengers](#) [#EquityChat](#)

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres_lmj·1m](#)

(1/2)“Eye of the tiger. from the Rocky series is my walk-up theme song. As a kid growing up in the 80s and 90s, Rocky was so inspirational and made me feel like I can achieve anything. He did the impossible, so I know I can do the impossible too.

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres_lmj·38s](#)

(2/2)If you want to achieve anything great, you have to focus completely on that task until completion. Focus has been my number one strength, and Equity is something we cannot take our eyes off. Equity Eye of the Tiger!

[5:09 pm] Keith

Q2 [@ivcpres_lmj](#). Congrats 2023 [#AspenPrize](#) [#CommunityCollegeExcellence](#)! [@ivcollege](#) has created one of the nation's most effective k-12 partnerships. Tell us more about how this relationship was fostered. [@DrPamLuster](#) [@DrTammeil](#) [@CollegeFutures](#) [@EquityAvengers](#) [#EquityChat](#)

(1/2)[@DrPamLuster](#) It required years of dedicated & focused relationship building. When I started IVC, our K-12 partners made clear that we weren't working together to create a seamless transition from K-12 to IVC. Thus, we worked tirelessly to change this perspective and reality

(2/3)We created data-sharing MOUs, launched dual enrollment agreements, provided yearly updates on their students, started attending K-12 meetings regularly, hosted & sponsored events for administrators, teachers & counselors, & collaborating with K-12 on projects.

(3/3) This led to greater trust & transparency, and as a result, they were eager to help us help their students enroll in IVC. They no longer were neutral or discouraging students to enroll, but encouraging students to consider IVC. We have great teamwork.

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres 1mj-4m](#)

Replying to [@lamkeithcurry @ivcollege and 4 others](#)

1/2 Dr. Keith Curry. It took years of building and nurturing our relationship with our K-12 partners. In addition to what I mentioned @Dr.PamLuster, we have assigned counselors to all of the HS.

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres 1mj-1m](#)

Replying to [@lamkeithcurry @ivcollege and 4 others](#)

2/2 We also meet regularly with the principals and counselors of each school to see how we can best meet their students' needs. We want them to be our on-the-ground advocates, as they are the most influential people to students

[5:16 pm] Pam

Q3 @ivcpres_1mj. @AspenInstitute states @ivcollege has some of the fastest-growing completion rates in the country. What programs/policies have been implemented to achieve these rates? @DrTammeil @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures @EquityAvengers #EquityChat

(1/3) We are happy about the improved completion rates, and again, it took years of hard work & a commitment to equity to achieve this success. We implemented a lot of strategies; particularly, we completely revamped how we schedule classes from faculty-driven to student-driven.

2/3) We changed our priority registration & created processes to allow students near completion to get priority registration. We invested millions of dollars to address student success, including tutoring, basic needs, housing, emergency aid, technology, etc.

3/3) This led to greater trust & transparency, and as a result, they were eager to help us help their students enroll in IVC. They no longer were neutral or discouraging students to enroll, but encouraging students to consider IVC. We have great teamwork.

[5:23 pm] Tammeil

Q4 @ivcpres_1mj. What would you say are the "Big E" and "Small E" goals to achieve equity? As Superintendent/President @ivcollege, what is your role in achieving these goals? @DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures @EquityAvengers #EquityChat

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres](#) [1mj](#) · 1m

Replying to [@DrTammeil @ivcollege and 4 others](#)

(1/2)The Big E is Equitable Money: “Follow the money, & it will disclose your priorities.” We did this & made changes in how we allocate money. Prior to, budget was based on perceived needs, but we revamped it to align funding on equity priorities & student success using data.

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres](#) [1mj](#) · 1m

Replying to [@DrTammeil @ivcollege and 4 others](#)

(1/3)The Little E is an Equitable treatment. We can't underestimate the impact of negative experiences on campus. We must be vigilant in addressing the treatment of students & help employees become the conscience of their biases. It only takes one bad experience to lose a student

[5:29 pm] Keith

Q5 @ivcpres_1mj. What recommendations do you have for leaders looking to emulate #CommunityCollegeExcellence and advance equitable student success through effective culture and practice at their institutions? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures @EquityAvengers #EquityChat

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson@ivcpres](#) [1mj](#) · 2m

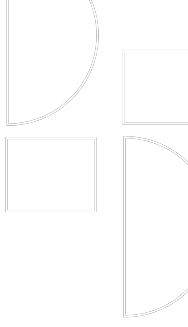
(1/5)Three recommendations: instill a culture of care w/i your organization. It starts at the top. You have to be inspiring yet firm, demanding yet accommodating; & laser-like focused on the goals yet flexible in the execution. Most importantly, you must show everyone you care.

(2/5)Hire right & invest in people. Must provide ongoing professional development (PD) for faculty, staff & especially administrators. We often assume managers know how to lead because of the title, but in many cases, improvement is needed. Professional development in:

(3/5) How to be influential, how to have crucial conversations, and how to instill equity throughout an organization- are all necessary to achieve this work. Of course, it starts with hiring equity-minded people, which in my opinion, is more important than knowledge & skill.

(4/5) Fight the good fight. There are always conflicting agendas within colleges; you must be firmly committed to this work & you have to actively sell your position. Get as much support early from faculty, staff, and administrators when implementing strategies.

(5/5)Also remember MLK's quote: If you can't fly, run; if you can't run, walk; if you can't walk, crawl, but whatever you do, keep moving forward. You may not be able to get from A to Z in a day, but you can get from A to B in a day. Set the goals & strategically move forward.



[5:36 pm] Pam

Q6 @ivcpres_lmj. To do this work, we must continue learning and partnering with others. Who/what is informing your practice? Who do you recommend we follow, and what are you learning from them? @DrTammeil @IamKeithCurry @CollegeFutures @EquityAvengers #EquityChat

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres_lmj·2m](#)

(1/5) There are so many excellent resources out there that practitioners should refer to. I love the work of Drs. Luke Woods & Frank Harris. Also, I'm quite fond of Dr. Shaun Harper. As well as the Equity Avengers - Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson, Dr. Keith Curry, and Dr. Pam Luster.

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster·1m](#)

Lennor, have been a fan of yours for a bit too-I miss your wisdom from attending our SDICCCA meetings-love it so much that you are thriving as you lead [@ivcollege](#)

(2/5) Also, there are some great books that I often refer to Excellence through Equity by Alan Blankstein and Pedro Noguera; The Equity Toolkit by Adam Kahane, and my favorite, Why All of the Black Kids Sit Together by Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum. Many others.

(3/5) We should also follow the Community College Research Center (CCRC), National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education (NCORE), Chronicle of Higher Education, Aspen Institute, and the Hanover Education Research, to name a few.

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster](#)

Attending [@NCOREou](#) & committing to teams that fed our professional development changed so much

(4/5) I've learned a lot from these researchers, books & organizations. Particularly how deep & interwoven the fabric of inequities & injustices are in our systems. They are in everything we do, so as equity champions, we must dismantle them piece by piece, brick by brick.

(5/5) Some specific things I have learned are rewriting the curriculum to be inclusive, addressing social-economic & outside classroom challenges, changing policies to be equitable, realigning funding to support equity & tips to confront discriminatory or inequitable practices.

[5:42pm] Tammeil

Q7 @ivcpres_lmj. As you reflect on your work, what gives you hope? @DrPamLuster @IamKeithCurry @CollegeFutures @EquityAvengers #EquityChat

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres_lmj](#)

(1/2)Equity Avengers give me hope & other like-minded organizations. California gives me hope. (Florida doesn't, but I digress). There are many people committed to this work & serve as resources.

(2/2) It is beholden on us to take advantage of these resources and make our campuses equitable. Our future depends on it, or the counter forces will dismantle all of what we are creating. We have to fight for equity and be uncompromising.

[5:48 pm] Keith

Q8 [@ivcpres_lmj](#). Last question for the night, what advice would you give to other equity practitioners? [@DrPamLuster](#) [@DrTammeil](#) [@CollegeFutures](#) [@EquityAvengers](#) #EquityChat

[Dr. Lennor M. Johnson @ivcpres_lmj](#)

(1/2)Stay focused. Have the eye of the tiger. When you increase minority success, you increase all students' success. Be innovative & follow your gut. Many of us come from diverse backgrounds & experienced racism, & inequities; reflect on those experiences when leading.

(2/2)What didn't like? What undermined your success? What drove you to persist against all odds? Think about your peers who didn't persist? What barriers got in the way? How would you remove them to help friends/family? Personalize it; be relentless in achieving equity.

[6:00 pm] Pam

Inspiring [@ivcpres_lmj](#) learning fr [@ivcollege](#), [#studentcentered](#) [#datainformed](#) [#investmentinsystems](#)! TY 4 joining us! Next wk we hear from [@CabrilloCollege](#) Pres Wetstein and our own [@DrTammeil](#) on the [@ccleague](#) report on Financial Aid <https://ccleague.org/about-us/press-releases-statements/new-report-released-financial-aid-feeling-pressure-increased...> [@equityavengers](#) OUT!