

Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart
President, Amarillo College
June 28, 2023

[5:00 pm] Pam

Welcome to the final Season 3 [#EquityChat](#) spons. by [@CollegeFutures](#)! Our guest is [@LoweryHart](#), Pres [@AmarilloCollege](#). He is a long time [#RealCollege](#) friend and was our 1st guest on [#EquityChat](#)! Excited to chat [#AspenPrize](#) & more [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@DrTammeil](#). Welcome Russell!

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 29s](#)

Replying to [@DrPamLuster](#) [@CollegeFutures](#) and 3 others

So glad and honored to share this space with you all.

[5:03 pm] Tammeil

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

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

First - Happy [@iamkeithcurry](#) day. You are Magic, Heart, and brilliance rolled into a powerful force.

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

If you can forgive the vernacular, its [@BethHart](#) "Get Your Sh*t Together." The issue of equity falls on those who hold power and those who've historical held and abused that power. If we want to change equity outcomes, my white colleagues and I have to get our sh*t together.

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster · 3m](#)

ooh- new to me artist...googling...

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 2m](#)

Raw, powerful, authentic. One of the best concerts I've ever attended!

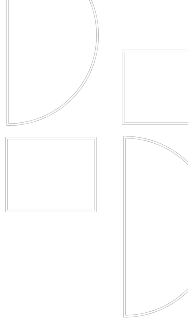
[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster](#)

We now have the [@equityavengers](#) WalkUp Anthems weblink on spotify...we will be adding!

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 1m](#)

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

This is AWESOME! I can't wait to engage this list!



[5:09 pm] Keith

Q2 @LoweryHart. Congrats 2023 #AspenPrize #CommunityCollegeExcellence! @AmarilloCollege is guided by a commitment to “love students to success.” What does this #communityofcare look like in action? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures @EquityAvengers #EquityChat

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 1m](#)

Replying to [@Iamkeithcurry @AmarilloCollege and 4 others](#)

The culture of caring is both simple and complex. You can thoughtfully, systemically, and intentionally love students to success - it not just a bout the FEELING of love - but how you live and walk out that love as an employee, colleague, institution, and community. 1/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 33s](#)

Replying to [@LoweryHart @Iamkeithcurry and 5 others](#)

LOVE requires every employee to understand that every interaction and every project or job assignment requires our work to be wrapped in relationship and help. Employees carry the culture of caring with them in every interaction they have with students and each other. 2/

[russell lowery-hart](#)

[@LoweryHart](#)

Love is systemic. Social workers. emergency aid. Accelerated learning. Required tutoring w/ faculty at center. Co-Req w/ dev ed faculty as learning facilitators within the credit-bearing courses. 8-week courses improving time to degree. Love is ACTION based on data. 3/

[5:16 pm] Pam

Q3 @LoweryHart. @AspenInstitute noted @AmarilloCollege’s extraordinary improvements in graduation rates. What innovative ways has the college used data to implement changes to achieve these outcomes? @DrTammeil @Iamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures @EquityAvengers #EquityChat

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

Great, great, great question - data democracy. Buckle up. 1/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 1m](#)

We talk a lot about data democracy - ensuring every employee has access to our general college data and access to specific data they need to ensure they are having the impact they work towards. 2/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

Data Democracy. Most of the time, data is a power base. If you hold the data, you hold power. If data is used to control or punish, it ain't helpin' students! Transparently share data, train all everyone to access & use it, then watch the magic they create for students. 4/

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

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 7m

Our theory of change drives our innovation. The elements of our theory of change were defined by the data that could predict its impact on students' success or at least demonstrate its historical success. 4/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 5m

Removing a life barrier + accelerated learning systems + culture of caring = completion. provide intentional social services, shorten time to degree with 8-week classes, require tutoring, and co-req where students - wrap in deep love and care - students will succeed. 5/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 5m

For [@amarillocollege](#) this theory of change worked and is reflected in our budgets, organizational structures, and employee hiring and evaluation. Data is foundational to this. Data Democracy. 6

[Dr. Keith Curry #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @lamkeithcurry](#) · 4m

Budgets are statement of values

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

Our budgets tell us what our truth is

[5:23 pm] Tammeil

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

[russell lowery-hart@LoweryHart](#)

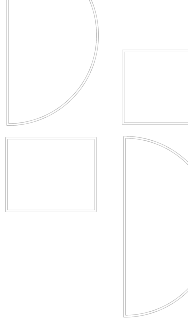
Within [@AmarilloCollege](#), as President, I am the Chief Equity Officer. I knew that if we were going to change our equity data, then Big E and little e had to be integrated throughout the college and everyone needed to understand equity's foundation within their work. 1/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 4m

Our Small E goals - ensuring course and program outcomes honor our each and all of our students. Focusing on learning - at the course level - is the foundation for understanding and acting on the larger structures that must change. 2/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 3m

Our Big E goals - help our power structure (collegiate and community) reflect our neighbors. We have to help our entire community love their neighbors - all of them - to success and our college has to be the glue, the convener, the connector, and then explainer. 3/



[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 1m](#)

As the CEO (Chief Equity Officer) I must personally understand, listen, question, protect, teach, & challenge. We've built structures that closed our student equity gaps. yet, our colleagues were still so uncertain and fearful about talking about equity in a social scale 4/

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · 3m](#)

Hell, yes! Let's go, Chief Equity Officer!

[Dr. Keith Curry #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @Iamkeithcurry · 2m](#)

I love this.

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster · 2m](#)

AMEN!

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

If we (college employees/leaders/citizens) are afraid to talk about things like racism, sexism, bias - we can't truly love our students to success. We have to show our community and colleagues how to talk about these issues. 4/

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Yes, yes! We must create spaces to also understand the racial trauma and battle fatigue for so many doing this work. We need co-conspirators and Chief Equity Officers like you who are willing to stand inside the fence. [#wagelove](#)

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

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 1m](#)

we can learn how to love each other to success if we have courage to dialogue, train, listen, understand. 5/

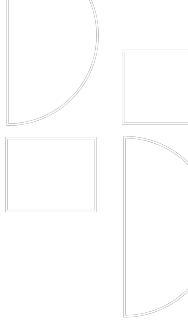
[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 1m](#)

Our country has rooted itself in racial divisions rather than racial healing. Community College are positioned to step into these spaces and love our communities back together, because we are apolitical and we are the most trusted institution in most communities. 6

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson](#)

[@DrTammeil](#)

Taking the responsibility to model what real learning is as a CEO is one of our most important responsibilities. How can we expect others to join us if we are unwilling to demonstrate this humility?



[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · 7m](#)

Replying to [@LoweryHart @AmarilloCollege and 4 others](#)

Centering a liberatory education also scares people in and amongst racial divisions. I agree there is a need for racial healing, but I also hope we are willing to center what liberation means in our institutions & the wider community for Black & Brown communities.

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

100%. As my grandmother would say to me growing up, "that'll preach" [@DrTammeil](#)

[5:29 pm] Keith

Q5 @LoweryHart. 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

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

Many, many colleges have programs that work. Students in such programs experience the kinds of support systems and learning outcomes that close equity gaps. The problem? Once institutions identify these programs that work, they fail to scale them for impact. 1/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 1m](#)

Wanna advance equitable student success? Invest in and scale those interventions that work and stop spending time and money on boutique programs that could never be scaled. SCALE for impact. 2

[5:36 pm] Pam

Q6 @LoweryHart. 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

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

I love this question. I learn so much from what, where, and from and with whom colleagues learn. 1/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 5m](#)

First, & foremost, our students continually inform, challenge, educate, & redesign my understanding & our college's work. Many of our issues could be solved by listening to & empowering our students. They know what they need us to be if we have the courage to listen to them. 2/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 4m

And our [@EquityAvengers](#) frame conversations for growth that inspire me - your courage, vision, heart, and communication make me (and all of us collectively) better educators and better people. 3/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 4m

Some incredible minds inform my own understanding - Personal and professional giants [@TriCPrez](#) [@SPCPresident](#) [@TrimekaBenjamin](#) [@drtamaraclunis](#) [@saragoldrickrab](#) challenge and inspire me daily. 4/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 3m

Books that I wish everyone would read: White Women: Everything You Already Know About Your Own Racism and How to Do Better by [@sairasameerarao](#) & [@reginajacksonme](#) 5/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 3m

Textured Teaching: A Framework for Culturally Sustaining Practices by [@nenagerman](#) 6/

[russell lowery-hart@LoweryHart](#) · 3m

Twelve Steps for White America: For a United States of America by [@williamwatsonww](#) 7/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 2m

The magic begins with listening too and then empowering the student voice [#Maria](#) [#RealCollege](#) [#CultureofCaring](#) 8

[5:42pm] Tammeil

Q7 [@LoweryHart](#). As you reflect on your work, what gives you hope? [@DrPamLuster](#) [@IamKeithCurry](#) [@CollegeFutures](#) [@EquityAvengers](#) [#EquityChat](#)

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#)

Community Colleges as a sector give me hope. Scanning the higher ed landscape the innovations necessary to save higher ed from itself & the work of closing equity gaps is happening in community colleges whom lead higher education & communities in profound/exciting ways. 1/

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart](#) · 2m

Our students' hope lies in us - their resilience in the face of our broken & selfish bureaucracies should break our hearts. We often celebrate student resilience instead of doing the hard work to ensure our students don't have to be resilient just to get through our systems. 2

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 1m](#)

I have hope that Community Colleges can fix higher ed for our students, centering their voice, experience, needs in our reformation. Love x Learning = Success. We can do this.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · 1m](#)

Me too! Me too! Proud to be working with [@AchieveTheDream](#) [@USCRaceEquity](#) and the colleges doing the deep work in the Racial Equity Leadership Academy that focuses on this work. Congratulations [@AmarilloCollege](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · 37s](#)

That's my kind of math! Love x Learning=Success [#WageLove](#) [#ShowLove](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · 3m](#)

If you aren't outraged, you aren't paying attention.

[5:48 pm] Keith

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

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 2m](#)

Love. Full stop. Then build systems around that love that are informed by those needing us most - systems driven by data, scaled for maximum engagement, and responsible to those most vulnerable. It is as simple, and complex, as that. Love. I so love you [@equityavengers](#).

[russell lowery-hart @LoweryHart · 2m](#)

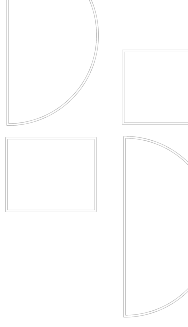
I'm honored by this conversation and your questions. We can only improve when we have the courage to talk about these issues openly, honestly, transparently. Thank you for bringing us along on this learning journey [@equityavengers](#)

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

And we love you [@LoweryHart](#) ! One of our best ever, in depth, action focused chats ...you bring the fire & heart [#EquityChat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · 1m](#)

Right back atcha, [@LoweryHart](#). Full Stop.



[6:00 pm] Pam

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster](#) · 2m

TY [@LoweryHart](#) for joining us & inspiring our good work! TY to our guests & followers for tuning in to [#EquityChat](#) spon [@CollegeFutures](#). We will be back w/new guests in Season 4, & posting look back chats all summer [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@DrTammeil](#) [@DrPamLuster](#) [@equityavengers](#) OUT!

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#) · 42m

Replying to [@DrPamLuster](#) [@LoweryHart](#) and 3 others

Thank you to [@LoweryHart](#) and all the amazing [#EquityChat](#) guests this season. It's our privilege to uplift and learn from your research, leadership, and vision for [#RacialEquity](#). I've learned so much. [#gratitude](#)

