

Dr. Adrián Trinidad

Associate Director, Community College Partnerships

USC Race and Equity Center

November 8, 2023

[5:00 pm] Pam

Welcome back to #EquityChat sponsored by @CollegeFutures w/your hosts @lamkeithcurry @DrTammeil & @DrPamLuster. Tonight, we're excited to chat w/@AdrianTrinid, Assoc. Dir. of CC Partnerships @USCRaceEquity. Welcome!

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinid·1m](#)

Thank you so much for having me!

[5:05 pm] Tammeil

Q1 @AdrianTrinid As you engage in equity-focused work, what is your walk-up song or anthem? @DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinid·1m](#)

Love this question! Lovely day by Bill Withers always sets the mood off right. Alright by <http://K.dot> & Freedom by Beyoncé also rock. Sometimes I need to feel like I'm at a family party w/ tamborazo hitting El Último Rodeo or Marcha de Zacatecas [#EquityChat](#)

[5:11 pm] Keith

Q2 @AdrianTrinid. Your research has focused on equity reforms & policy, org change cultures, and race-conscious leadership, particularly w/in community colleges. Was there a defining moment or experience that catalyzed your journey? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinid·1m](#)

(1/5) My CC English Prof talked about being neither from here (U.S.) nor there (Latin America) as an immigrant. I related to that feeling of betweenness in higher Ed. How does that happen? Why until college did I have my 1st Latinx instructor that made me feel seen in class?

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinid·2m](#)

(2/5) For me, it's about making sure our people go through institutions and come out as themselves. No doctorate or title should make you unable to speak to your family & community. Bad Bunny's unapologetically Spanish SNL skits are a brilliant ex of being true to yourself.

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinidad](#) · 3m

(3/5) I went thru mental gymnastics the first time a friend asked me if I went by 'Adrian or Adrián' at age 26. I had never realized I had agency over my name and there's power in that. Education should empower students and invite them to transform our rules & ways of thinking.

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinidad](#) · 3m

(4/5) I grew up low-income in 90s South Central LA. My community was hurting at the time and what made things worse was hearing people argue the problem was our culture or decision making. Learning critical truths about our history liberated me to challenge false racist tropes.

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinidad](#) · 2m

(5/5) We were never the problem. Many racialized experiences led me to believe in the power of affirming people. [#EquityChat](#)

[5:18 pm] Pam

Q3 @AdrianTrinidad. We're proud contributors of @USCRaceEquity Racial Equity Commission's racial equity framework for @CalCommColleges. How do we combat system pushback to adopting this new race-centric model? @DrTammeil @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinidad](#) · 2m

(1/5) First, I'd say check out the racial equity framework for [@CalCommColleges](#) by visiting our site here: <http://racialequityframework.org> Also, check out our framework toolkit. Share with your colleagues and bring the framework to your department: <https://uscrec.info/frameworktoolkit>

(2/5) We welcome pushback. It means we're all learning. Sensemaking theory says we only understand what we believe or do after the fact. Disconfirming data that 'shocks' our way of thinking is good! We need dialogue. But what's the root of pushback & how are we centering students?

(3/5) Org change depends a lot on how we interpret new initiatives and how we're supported to rethink our existing practice. A lot of pushback comes from ppl who do not have an opportunity to reflect on the data and come to terms with their role in perpetuating inequities.

(4/5) Everyone also has a role. Anyone can bring this framework to team meetings and discuss what it can look like. The key is engaging in conversation because what's happening now isn't working for most students.

(5/5) The last and most important piece, students need to be at the center. How will this race-centric model improve students' experiences in the classroom, the financial aid office, etc. Race plays a role regardless of how we feel or think about it. [#EquityChat](#)

[5:25 pm] Tammeil

Q4 @AdrianTrinidad. The @USCRaceEquity @CollegeFutures Solutions Briefs series have been a great resource for #highered practitioners. Can you share the thought behind releasing the most recent series as a graphic novel? @DrPamLuster @IamKeithCurry #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinidad · 2m](#)

(1/4) The graphic novel brief series highlights how leaders have embedded race consciousness in their respective roles within guided pathways. We wanted it to be accessible, inspirational and a learning tool for change. Check it out here: <http://racialequityforccc.com/briefs>

(2/4) I'm always fascinated by people's 'why' and how they became equity champions. The storytelling in this series is beautiful because it shows the moments and thinking that go into pushing back against a racist status quo.

(3/4) We'd love for the series to be offered as a course reading. Students should learn what goes into creating culturally affirming spaces and be invited to participate authentically. The brief provides a roadmap for leaders at all levels to center race consciousness.

(4/4) This brief was a labor of love from the leaders represented, the artists and designers [@bridgegood](#), [@equityavengers](#), especially [@DrTammeil](#), and my colleague [@mctran55](#). I'm especially proud of this brief and its potential for readers. I hope they read it and are inspired.

[5:32 pm] Keith

Q5 @AdrianTrinidad. What is a current or new @USCRaceEquity initiative/project that you're excited about? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinidad · 3m](#)

(1/4) I'm a firm believer that those closest to the problem are closest to the solution. We're reviewing student proposals on how to transform our [@CalCommColleges](#). Over \$52k thanks to [@CollegeFutures](#) will go towards uplifting student voices. Sneak peek: their ideas are fire.

(2/4) Stay tuned for announcements of the winning submissions: <http://racialequityforccc.com/svc>

[@USCRaceEquity](#)

(3/4) I'm also excited about our [#Takeoff](#) project supporting men of color initiatives at 15 CCs nationwide, thanks to [@ECMCFoundation](#). What these colleges are doing is exemplary and their innovative approaches to supporting men of color will be models for us all.

(4/4) Lastly, excited we're launching a faculty prep academy in partnership w/ [@compton_college](#) to center racial equity principles with a cohort of graduate students who aspire to become faculty. Stay tuned for the application in 2024. [#EquityChat](#)

[5:39 pm] Pam

Q6 @AdrianTrinidad. To do this work, we must continue learning and partnering with others. How do you educate yourself and who is informing your practice? @DrTammeil @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinidad·1m](#)

(1/4) Great question! I'm always inspired by reading James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, and Mike Rose. Brilliant people whom I'm always learn from include [@RomanLiera](#) [@CynDVillarreal](#) [@Tichavakunda](#) [@victorerikray](#) [@Dr_ADJ_Gonzalez](#) [@GinaAnnGarcia](#) [@NJodaitis](#) [@CherylDyChing](#) [@ebensimon](#)

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster·56s](#)

Great people, wonderful work, creates inspiration [#EquityChat](#)

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinidad·1m](#)

(2/4) [@JetaunStevens](#) [@profjennifero](#) [@MelissaAbeyta](#) [@drvictorrios](#) [@NaomiCastroProf](#) [@EriqFelix](#) [@c_galan](#) [@vanessamiller_](#) [@atachine](#) [@nelsonflores](#) [@kennynien](#) [@drcriss_salinas](#) [@garceslm](#) [@joseiswriting](#) [@NiggaTheory](#) [@Prof_MPastor](#) [@hfdavis](#) [@LauralRendon](#)

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(3/4) At the risk of not tagging everyone, I learn from the leaders of [@A2MEND2006](#) [@CCCOLEGAS](#) [@APAHENational](#) [@THECOALITIONCC](#)

[Adrián Trinidad@AdrianTrinidad·1m](#)

(4/4) Lastly, shameless plug, the amazing group of commissioners I've worked with over two years inform my practice; see them here: <http://racialequityframework.org> [#EquityChat](#)

[5:46pm] Tammeil

Q7 @AdrianTrinidad. We all have a vision of the future we want to live in. What is your freedom dream for higher education and what gives you hope for its future? @DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinidad·9m](#)

(1/4) Community college was my first and only choice. I didn't apply for 4-year institutions. I was confident and knew I'd be supported to meet my goals. Word of mouth that my college [@LATTC](#) was excellent also excited me. CCs are truly pioneers in serving students' needs.

(2/4) I hope for a future that acknowledges the vital role CCs play in making college accessible and tailored to students. Our future as a society depends on leaders who model equity in practice. We need doctors, lawyers, social workers etc., who understand communities of color

(3/4) and show empathy and care for their well-being. Community colleges are models of what community-centered education can look like. That should be the yardstick. [#EquityChat](#)

(4/4) What gives me hope is our youth. I'm always amazed by their stories and their ideas. Time also makes me hopeful. Day to day, it may feel like we aren't making progress, but it takes time for new people and ideas to come in. [#EquityChat](#)

[5:53 pm] Keith

Q8 @AdrianTrinid. The road to racial equity is long. How are you sustaining yourself? What practice would you recommend to other #EquityAvengers? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinid·45s](#)

(1/2) My family keeps me grounded & remind me why this work is needed. I have many hobbies that give me a creative and spiritual outlet. I'll admit I'm not the best at self-care but through therapy, I learned that breathing exercises are important. My two cats keep it fun!

[Adrián Trinidad @AdrianTrinid·1m](#)

(2/3) I also think a lot of mom's dicho (saying), "Dime con quién andas, y te diré quién eres." which translates to, 'tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are.' [#EquityChat](#)

[6:00 pm] Pam

TY @AdrianTrinid for supporting @CalCommColleges through #racialequity resources and partnership. Join #EquityChat @CollegeFutures next week as we host Guillermo Mayer (@memomayer), President/CEO @publicadvocates. @lamkeithcurry @DrTammeil @DrPamLuster @equityavengers OUT!