

Dr. Ivan Harrell

President, Tacoma Community College

June 5, 2024

[5:00 pm] [Dr. Pam Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

Welcome to #EquityChat sponsored by @CollegeFutures w/your @equityavengers hosts @lamkeithcurry @DrTammeil & @DrPamLuster - tonight we are joined by @TCCpres Dr. Ivan L Harrell whose work we have followed for many years-addressing housing basic needs. Welcome Dr Harrell!

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

I'm looking forward to tonight's chat.

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

We look forward to highlighting your great work!

[5:05 pm] [Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson \(@DrTammeil\)](#)

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

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(1/4) I think it changes over time, but as of today it is Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now by McFadden & Whitehead. I believe the lyrics portray where we as a college community are in regards to our equity work.

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

Groovin to it right now <https://t.co/ArY8vE1CiK>

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(2/4) One line of the song says "I know we've got a long, long way to go, and where we'll end up I don't know, but we won't let nothing hold us back," and the chorus states "Ain't no stopping us now, we're on the move."

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

It's one of my favorite jams! <https://t.co/kl4Jia5rCA>

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

It will be the recessional music for commencement this year. :-)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Oooh! I just finished my four commencements! Next year!

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(3/4) True and meaningful equity work is difficult and it takes time to make meaningful change. In doing the work there are always forces and people that intentionally or unintentionally attempt to stop the work from moving forward, but as the song says we ain't stopping now.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

I appreciate your calling out the people and forces that intentionally or unintentionally attempt to stop the equity work--it's true, but I am proud to be connected with leaders like you who are committed to never stopping! [#Liberation](#)

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(4/4) Our students, faculty, staff and community deserve for us to do all that we can to ensure that we are providing the best and most supportive environment for our diverse community.

[5:11 pm] [Dr. Keith Curry \(@iamkeithcurry\)](#)

Q2 @TCCpres. Was there a defining moment or experience that catalyzed your journey to engage in this work, particularly as a community college leader? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(1/5) I can think back to a time at a previous institution where our data clearly showed that the student group that needed the most support was students who looked like me, particularly Black men.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(2/5) I developed a plan to develop a program to support Black male students, and initially received pushback from the college. Understanding the importance of this work, and having experienced many of the challenges while I was in college that these men were experiencing

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(3/5) I found a way to move the work forward. Fast forward and the program became successful and the college then "embraced" it fully. That experience helped me realize that for me to have the most ability to move forward with meaningful change...

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(4/5) particularly in supporting students of color and others who have traditionally been marginalized in higher education, that I needed to become a community college president.

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

We have to roll up our sleeves and find ways to invite folks to join us-listen-reflect-data-action-assess

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(5/5) Oh, and that program is alive and thriving still to this day. :-)

[5:18 pm] [Dr. Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

Q3 @TCCpres. @educationnw recently published a longitudinal evaluation of @tacomacc & Tacoma Housing Authority's College Housing Assistance Program. Were you surprised by any of the findings? @DrTammeil @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(1/6) Yes, I was definitely surprised by some of the findings, both good and not so good. Starting with the not so good, I was surprised that only 1 in 4 students who were accepted into the program were able to lease up. This was a result of multiple challenges.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)



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[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(2/6) In particular students had a difficult time completing the complicated HUD application and many experienced challenges finding landlords who would rent to them. This mirrors the experiences many people from low-income backgrounds have when using housing vouchers.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

It really does and is so frustrating how these barriers continue to exist.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(3/6) On a positive note, I was surprised and pleased with the outcomes. The program had a positive impact on graduation rates, with housed students having higher rates than the national average.

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

Which makes sense!

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Wonderful!

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)



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[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(4/6) The program also had additional positive impacts such as increasing food security, financial stability and decreases in interactions with the criminal justice system.



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

Imagine that-investing in wrap around and demonstrating care, follow through and building community...works!

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

Absolutely.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Right! Imagine that!

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(5/6) I also want to take the opportunity to thank Sara Goldrick-Rab and Education Northwest for completing this important study, and the Tacoma Housing Authority for their partnership.

[@educationnw](#) [@saragoldrickrab](#)

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(6/6) The full report can be found at: <https://educationnorthwest.org/resources/homelessness-housing-insecurity-among-community-college-students...> [@educationnw](#) [@saragoldrickrab](#)

[5:25 pm] [Dr. Gilkerson \(@DrTammeil\)](#)

Q4 @TCCpres. What were your biggest takeaways from the program and how can they inform future programs to address student housing insecurity at @tacomacc and other community colleges?

@DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(1/7) There are lots of takeaways from the work and study that we hope will provide valuable information to other higher education institutions as they work to address issues of student housing insecurity. Some of the key takeaways are:

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(2/7) Implementing a program like this is heavily dependent on adequate funding, staffing and support.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(3/7) There is a need to have staff supporting the students who have more of a social work background as opposed to a "traditional" student affairs background. Many of the students come with issues, concerns, and needs that require intensive support.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(4/7) The source of funding is important. Because this program relied upon federal funding, through HUD housing vouchers, we were limited on how to use the funding and it required substantial bureaucracy that may not be needed if we were able to use college or private funding.

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

We talk about braiding, leveraging...if we had public will and long term commitment it would be a game changer [#EquityChat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

It's important for us to elevate these issues—people think we have sources to support low-income communities but then are frustrated by outcomes. The level of bureaucracy is real on both sides.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(5/7) It is important to make the program as easy to understand and navigate as possible.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(6/7) Know that this type of program can only be one options in a set of programs intended to address housing insecurity.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(7/7) The work of addressing issues of housing insecurity for community college students is difficult and complicated, but extremely necessary.

[5:32 pm] [Dr. Curry \(@iamkeithcurry\)](#)

Q5 @TCCpres. As you reflect on this past academic year, what are 2-3 priorities you plan to focus on for next year? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(1/2) We will continue our equity and belonging work on our road to becoming an anti-racist institution. Focus will be given to policies and practices, and important work to creating an environment that is conducive to supporting the success of all students, faculty and staff.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(2/2) Preparation for the 60th Anniversary in 2025 and Completion of our new Center for Innovative Learning and Engagement <https://tacomacc.edu/tcc-life/around-campus/cile>

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

Loving your work, an excited to see your center for innovative learning and engagement!

[5:39 pm] [Dr. Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

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



[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(1/2) I can't say there is a particular who that informs my practice. Me and the team are using learnings from books, research studies, conferences/convenings, as well as seeing what is working well for other higher education institutions.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

So heartened by your focused equity work. I also learn so much from the great work happening across the nation's community colleges.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(2/2) Most importantly the voices of students, faculty, and staff inform my/our practice.

[5:46pm] [Dr. Gilkerson \(@DrTammeil\)](#)

Q7 @TCCpres. 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 @IamKeithCurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(1/2) My dream is that we create higher education environments that truly provide the culture, instruction, and support structures that allow all students and employees the ability to be their authentic selves as they strive to complete their personal and career goals.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Speaking my language! Students and employees being able to see themselves and be themselves authentically. Yes, yes, yes

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(2/2) What gives me hope is our students and all of the brilliance and resiliency that they possess.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Students are my best teachers. I'm honored by their patience and the lessons they've lovingly taught me.

[5:53 pm] [Dr. Curry \(@IamKeithCurry\)](#)

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

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(1/3) This is something that I continue to work on. One thing is I continually remind myself that creating meaningful change takes time. (These issues weren't created overnight and won't be fixed overnight.)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

But, "ain't no stopping you!" [#EquityAvenger](#)

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

organizations move at the speed of trust!

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(2/3) Also, due to the encouragement of my fellow presidents Dr. Daria Willis (Howard CC) and Dr. Chemene Crawford (Everett CC), I have begun doing Legos; they are such a stress reliever.

[@howardccprez @EvCCPresident](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Wow! I adore [@LEGO\\_Group!](#) Recently completed the flower arrangement and it sits in my living room. Glad to be in such good company!



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[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

That's beautiful.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

I'm embarrassed to show all my Lego Friends stuff

[Dr. Daria J. Willis @HowardCCPrez](#)

Why are you embarrassed? I just got this one in the mail today lol!



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<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/GPazZW0blAA79S?format=jpg&name=900x900>]

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster @HowardCCPrez](#) where do you put them all?

[Dr. Daria J. Willis @HowardCCPrez](#)

Office on campus, home office, living room, closets, corners lol, etc . I'm going to make a room for them soon.

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

Very nice! I love doing them with my grandkids-going to up my game!

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Wow! Lego Friends is nowhere near that amazing structure! Love it! I'm gonna have to up my game. Can't wait to see the completed masterpiece.

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

(3/3) I also have a supportive board that allows me time to disconnect. What I would recommend to others is to find what works for them, and to make sure they are finding meaningful time to disconnect, and to try Legos!

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

You're so fortunate to have a supportive board that understands the labor and burden. The topic of CEO health and wellbeing, particularly for CEOs of color, is new research I'm excited to be working on with [@EriqFelix](#) and [#CCHALES](#) to launch it soon!

[6:00 pm] [Dr. Luster \(@DrPamLuster\)](#)

TY @TCCpres for providing excellent resources tonight and keep up the great work! Next wk is our last Season 4 #EquityChat session & it's on Voter Engagement & Racial Equity w/@allintovote @FairElections & @Cvp\_Abdullah join us! @IamKeithCurry @DrTammeil @DrPamLuster OUT!

[Dr. Ivan Harrell @TCCpres](#)

Thank you for allowing me to participate. I'm blessed to be able to lead such an amazing institution, Tacoma Community College! [@tacomacc](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Thank you for honoring us! Tacoma Community College is fortunate to have you! In solidarity and community! "We're on the move!"

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

AS in your fave song...we won't let nothing hold us back, we gonna get ourselves together, polish up our act...and you helped us do just that tonight! loving your work [@TCCpres](#) thanks for being with us