

Shannon Williams

Community-Based Learning Coordinator, Inver Hills Community College

September 11, 2024

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

Welcome to #EquityChat w/your @equityavenger hosts @lamkeithcurry @DrTammeil & @DrPamLuster TONIGHT we welcome Shannon Williams @Shannonmar60223 of @InverHillsCC to chat all things student civic engagement-Welcome Shannon! #EquityAvengers

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

Thanks for having me! I'm excited to connect with everyone during tonight's [#equitychat!](#)

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

Exciting time to chat about these topics! [#EquityChat](#)

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

Q1 @Shannonmar60223. As you engage in equity-focused work, what is your walk-up song or anthem? @DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

Punk is my favorite genre of music, and there are a lot of political punk rock songs that would make for a great anthem! If I had to pick just one, "Red Flag" by [@TSMDetroit](#). [#EquityChat](#)

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

Ok- you may be our first punk fan...but this will definitely add some diversity to our [@equityavengers](#) playlist!

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

Q2 @Shannonmar60223. Was there a defining moment or experience that catalyzed your journey to engage in this work specifically around student community and civic engagement? @DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat #EquityAvengers

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(1/2) When I was in middle school, I participated in a readers' theater on racial equity that we performed in various classes. After one reading, a teacher told me that I would never be able to make a difference when it came to equity. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(2/2) 30 years later, I am motivated to prove him wrong every day by empowering students in community colleges to make the changes they want to see and have the ability to make. [#EquityChat](#)

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

Q3 @Shannonmar60223. Tell us more about community-based learning at @InverHillsCC? How does student engagement in CBL programs support student success and advance racial equity? @DrTammeil @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityAvengers

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(1/4) Community-Based Learning [@InverHillsCC](#) provides opportunities and experiences to develop the skills required to be an effective member and change agent of the community. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(2/4) Skills such as working across difference, effective advocacy, problem solving, and communication skills are important for being a change agent in the community AND in the workplace. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(3/4) CBL at [@InverHillsCC](#) includes: volunteering, civic engagement, in-class community projects, community service work study, social action initiatives, and the Student Food and Resource Center. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(4/4) Knowing how important these skills are to advancing equity and student success, we intentionally work to make these opportunities available to ALL students and not just those who have the luxury of time or finances. [#EquityChat](#)

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

Q4 @Shannonmar60223. Voting rates among comm colleges are ~10 percentage pts lower than 4-yr universities. What are unique barriers to this group? What innovative strategies has @InverHillsCC implemented to address them? @DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures #EquityAvengers

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(1/4) Community college students are balancing work (often full-time work or two+ jobs), family, and other obligations in addition to school. [#EquityChat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

[emoji: hundred points] many of them are killin' the game and juggling it all successfully. Still, I love how you're thinking through the barriers to participation by braiding existing mechanisms and resources. We don't have to make it so hard for students.

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(2/4) We address these barriers to voter outreach by compensating students to do peer-to-peer outreach through federal work study and stipends. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(3/4) This year we are putting an emphasis on faculty involvement so that we can reach students where they are – in the classroom. Thanks to a grant from [@SLSVCoalition](#), we implemented a faculty civic champion program. [#EquityChat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

I love this! Faculty Civic Champion Program! Share more!

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(4/4) The program incentivizes faculty by awarding stipends for integrating a variety of voter registration, education, and outreach activities into the classroom. [#EquityChat](#)

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

Q5 [@Shannonmar60223](#). How can we embed civic and community responsibility into curriculum and institutional programming to keep students engaged in this work beyond election cycles? [@DrPamLuster](#) [@DrTammeil](#) [@CollegeFutures](#) [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(1/3) One myth I encounter is that academic community-based projects must span the semester and take place outside of class time - a huge barrier for comm college students. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(2/3) There is always a way to take an existing assignment and incorporate a community lens by connecting learning outcomes with civic skills, policy that affects the discipline, and/or community partners. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(3/3) Organizations such as [@ProjectPericles](#), [@Campus\\_Compact](#) and [@allintovote](#) provide resources for institutions that make it easy to plug civic engagement into the curriculum and co-curriculum at all times, not just major election years. [#EquityChat](#)

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil](#)

Some of our [@equityavengers](#) favorite partners! Such wonderful resources

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

Q6 @Shannonmar60223. 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](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(1/4) Every year, I participate in communities of practice to hear diverse perspectives from across the country and institution types from practitioners doing this work. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(2/4) I seek out current publications such as "Anti-Racist Community Engagement", published by [@Campus\\_Compact](#). [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(3/4) I work closely and collaborate with our campus DEI professionals, and attend their programming so that I can always have the intersection of equity and civic engagement at the forefront of my workplan. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(4/4) Local community partners are also critical to keeping up-to-date with current community needs and trends. Developing relationships takes ongoing time and effort but are critical to informing our program. [#EquityChat](#)

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

Q7 @Shannonmar60223. If you could achieve one breakthrough in racial equity that would have the most significant impact on student success, what would it be? @DrPamLuster @lamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures  
[#EquityChat](#) [#EquityAvengers](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

Free tuition and financial support for basic needs such as housing, food, and child care. We can do it if we, as a nation, decide to make it a priority. [#EquityChat](#)

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

Q8 @Shannonmar60223. What words of advice would you give to practitioners who are passionate about engaging in equity work but are unsure of where to start or how to make a meaningful impact?  
@DrPamLuster @DrTammeil @CollegeFutures #EquityChat

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(1/3) Listen to the lived experiences of students. How can you use your position and spheres of influence to move the needle on equity from where you are within the institution? [#EquityChat](#)

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(2/3) Invite conversation with practitioners doing this work and invest in those relationships (without asking for unpaid emotional labor). Look for the connections with your skills and passion. [#EquityChat](#)

[Shannon M. Williams @Shannonmar60223](#)

(3/3) Don't be afraid to make mistakes. We all do. Just don't give up! [#EquityChat](#)

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

TY @Shannonmar60223 for sharing your work and amplifying the imperative for student civic engagement! Next week we host another expert in the national engagement space with @ACEducation Heidi Tsue @iamkeithcurry @DrTammeil @DrPamLuster @equityavengers OUT!