

Chazz Robinson  
Third Way Education  
November 20, 2024

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

INTRO

Welcome to #EquityChat with @ChazzRobinson\_, Education Policy Advisor at @ThirdWayEDU! Today, we'll discuss affordability, access, and outcomes in higher ed. Join us as we explore how we can better serve low-income students and make higher ed truly accessible. @DrTammeil @IamKeithCurry @equityavengers

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

Thanks for having me on. I'm excited for the chat!

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster · Nov 20](#)  
[#Letsgo!](#)

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

Q1 @ChazzRobinson\_ What is your 'walk-up' song or anthem that keeps you motivated in your work on higher ed policy? @IamKeithCurry @DrPamLuster #EquityChat

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

I love this question and have a few! I'd say my first is a live J Cole performance on the David Letterman show. He made the song and performed right after the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson. I think he was ahead of his time.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · Nov 20](#)

"All we want to do is take the chains off. All we want to do is take the chains off. All we want to do is be free. All we want to do is be free. All we want to do is take the chains off. All we want to do is break the chains off. All we want to do is be free.."

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

I have two more that get me going as well. One is by Wale-Love me Nina. And when I need to relax the nervous system a bit I love Tems' song called Ready.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · Nov 20](#)

These are both great anthems & love that you've got ones for your moods! So important. Tems' ready is so good. "Ready to go With the light in my soul I'm letting it show, darling I won't hide anymore"

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

Q2 @ChazzRobinson\_ Your journey into higher ed advocacy began early. How did your personal experiences shape your vision for equitable access and outcomes in college?

@DrTammeil @DrPamLuster #EquityChat

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

I grew up low-income to a single mom in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I love my city but it's one of the most incarcerated zip codes for black men in the country, (53206), one of the poorest cities, and has some the worst outcomes for Black people in America. That shaped me.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · Nov 20](#)

How could it not! The intersection of race, class, gender, and locality...

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

This is an amazing resource I wasn't familiar with. I can't wait to dig in!! Thank you!

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

I realized many don't consider class enough. It's an invisible identity and drives who's hired, who's selected to lead, and who's given access. In almost any organization in this country you can almost always point to class differences. That drives me.

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

Q3 @ChazzRobinson\_ @ChazzRobinson\_: In your research, what are some overlooked strategies that colleges can implement to support affordability for students? @DrTammeil

@lamkeithcurry #EquityChat

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

[@ThirdWayEDU](#) we emphasize transparency. Students should have an accurate FAFSA letter, be able to find cost and outcome data, and a true understanding of their financial future. I've seen some community colleges and MSIs do this well! Others should copy!

[Dr. Keith Curry #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @lamkeithcurry · Nov 20](#)

Transparency is key, and I feel student should know all the cost up for their college education and we don't change the cost while they are completing their degree program.

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

Not changing costs is a major point! Thank you for adding that one in!

[5:25pm] Dr Tammeil Gilkerson (@DrTammeil)

Q4 @ChazzRobinson\_ @ThirdWayEDU has been called 'radical centrists' for their innovative, fact-driven approach. How does this mindset impact your team's strategies and advocacy around affordability and educational equity? @lamkeithcurry @DrPamLuster #EquityChat

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

In my work, that means improving student outcomes for the most marginalized. It challenges @ThirdWayEDU to be pragmatic with our solutions while also being nimble enough to meet the moment. It can be tricky, but we believe that's our value add.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil · Nov 20](#)

We could all be a bit more nimble and pragmatic as we approach the work around racial equity and student success, especially if we want to create a genuine pathway for achieving these ideals for students and our communities.

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

Bipartisanship is how legislation moves. @ThirdWayEDU mission is to improve student outcomes in anypolitical context. In my work, that means improving student outcomes for the most marginalized.

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster · Nov 20](#)

How are you finding common ground @ChazzRobinson\_

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

Tbh right now it's hard. We are in a tough time for many. I think for me personally I'm all ears to hear what makes individuals make their choices. In work we try to find areas on legislation that can lead to solutions that benefit most.

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

[@DrPamLuster · Nov 20](#)

Listening is key, so hard right now to filter through folks actions which should be linked to values...and while I'm open...just feels tough

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson · Nov 20](#)

I tell everyone it's perfectly okay to have some time for you right now. We all need space for that!

[5:32 pm] Dr. Keith Curry (@lamkeithcurry)

Q5 @ChazzRobinson\_ You've mentioned that college shouldn't feel like a 'survival' experience.

What systemic changes would you advocate for to shift that narrative? @DrTammeil

@DrPamLuster #EquityChat

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_](#)

I believe cultural competence is key in all of this and I see it missing a lot in policy and academia. How can I create a solution for you as a student if I have no idea of who you are? We need a better understanding of today's students and their cultures.

[Dr. Keith Curry #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @lamkeithcurry · Nov 20](#)

I agree but at the same time as educators we have to spend time talking to and learning from our students.

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson · Nov 20](#)

We all do in my opinion. It's time to start listening for all of us.

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

Q6 @ChazzRobinson\_ To effect change, we must keep learning and building partnerships. Who or what informs your work, and how do you continue to grow in your field? @DrTammeil

@lamkeithcurry #EquityChat

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

I have a massive list and won't get to them all. But I love E Franklin Frazier who wrote Black Bourgeoisie, Cedric Robinson, Nina Simone, Kimberlee Crenshaw, and Anne Moody's Coming of Age in Mississippi change my way of thinking.

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

2: I also have great practitioners in this work that inspire me. Like Marshall Anthony Jr, Keith Curry, Patricia Steele, Richard Reeves. And two of my past mentors that are no longer here Dr. Bonnie and Dr. Esther Peralez.

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

And I can't lie [@lamkeithcurry](#) the work you're doing motivates me. Kendrick at Compton college was MAJOR!

[Dr. Keith Curry #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @lamkeithcurry · Nov 20](#)

Thanks, I am trying to do right for my community and the students we serve. Kendrick was major, and the best part was his speech to our students and the community. I often listen to the speech on those hard days as a reminder that we can't give up.

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

Q7 [@ChazzRobinson\\_](#) What is your 'freedom dream' for higher education? What gives you hope as you work toward a more equitable future? [@lamkeithcurry](#) [@DrPamLuster](#) #EquityChat

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

The people give me hope are those that don't have the recognition that they deserve who are changing society daily. The teacher who teaches in the hood, the lunch lady (like my grandma), the mechanic helping folks get to work. That's where I come from and the people I know!

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

My dream is they all live a life of upward mobility and I believe higher education plays a major role in all of that through workforce training, network building and the create of jobs in many areas around the United States!

[5:53 pm] Dr. Keith Curry (@lamkeithcurry)

Q8 [@ChazzRobinson\\_](#) The road to racial equity in higher education is long. How are you sustaining yourself, and what practices would you recommend to fellow #EquityAvengers? [@DrTammeil](#) [@DrPamLuster](#) #EquityChat

[Chazz Robinson @ChazzRobinson\\_ · Nov 20](#)

I should be doing more I can tell you that! But I love a good jog outside to clear my mind . I keep God first in all areas of my life and I believe in community. It's important we build community and stay around those that allow us to be our whole selves without judgment.

[Dr. Keith Curry #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @IamKeithCurry Nov 20](#)

I agree and I stay away from people who bring negativity. I want to be in my happy place at all times.

[Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson @DrTammeil Nov 20](#)

Me, too.

[Dr Pamela Luster #EquityAvengers #RealCollegePrez @DrPamLuster Nov 20](#)

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

CLOSE: Thank you, @ChazzRobinson\_ and @ThirdWayEDU, for joining #EquityChat and for your insights into affordability and access. Next week we are on hiatus for #TurkeyDay but we're back on 12/4 with @therealmsabbott, the inspiring educator whose story is the basis of #AbbottElementary!