

VOICES OF EQUITY PODCAST

Episode 2 Season 1

WHAT IS EQUITY?

FEMALE VOICE (singing): 0:00 We are the voices of equity podcast. We are the voices of equity podcast listen up ...ooh ... ooh...ooh...ooooh listen up.

MUSIC: 0:18 (Inaudible)

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: 0:24 Thank you for joining us for the voices of equity podcast at Lorain County Community College. We are your co-hosts Denise Douglas.

KIONNA MACINTOSH-PHARMS: 0:30 And Kionna McIntosh Pharms.

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: 0:34 As the Co-chairs of the equity for students' team at LCCC, we're excited to share the work of this team, the voices of those who do this work, and the voices of the students who are the reason their work. Today we're taking a deeper dive into equity. Specifically, what is equity? We asked LCCC student Tim Bradley that very question and here's what he had to say.

TIM BRADLEY: 0:56 Equity to me is something to do with your house. Like if you put money into it you refurnish it and you remodel it and you get that money back to the bank.

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: 1:07 Denise Douglas: If we were to do several persons on the street type interviews and asked that same question, "What is equity?" my guess is that you would get a lot of different definitions. But just for fun, let's ask Siri what she thinks the definition of equity is. Siri, what is the definition of equity?

SIRI: 1:22 The quality of being fair and impartial the value of the shares issued by a company.

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: 1:27 As you can see, Siri also has definition of fairness and being impartial, but she also has a second definition, which goes to the monetary value of equity. So, as we think about equity and how we define it here I would like to turn it over to Kionna, so she can talk a little bit more about another definition of equity.

KIONNA MACINTOSH-PHARMS: 1:47 Now if you're old school, you might Go to the old standard, The Merriam Webster Dictionary. Webster defines equity as the quality of being fair and impartial. Now what was pleasing to my ears that Siri also did the same thing. LCCC Went through a process of developing our equity statement and chose to include achieving the dream as a part of our definition. Our definitions specifically state: "Lorain County Community College is committed to equity. The idea that students from marginalized or underrepresented populations have access to resources that empower student's success and close completion achievement gaps. Equity is based upon the principle of fairness and is distinct from equality. While equality involves with treating everyone the same way, equity provides each individual or group what they need to have an equal opportunity to succeed. A commitment to equity also includes identifying and removing structural barriers faced by underserved students. As a campus community, we will adopt practices that promote equity, grow the culture of inclusion, demand social justice, and use that power to ensure success for all students. What we use specifically from Achieving the Dream, better known as ATD, were some examples of historically underrepresented students. That includes but is not limited to first generation and low-income students, students of color, adult students, marginalized orientation, gender identity, and intersex students, students with second language backgrounds, undocumented students, veterans, students with disabilities, students with dependents, foster care youth, and formerly and currently incarcerated students. I promise you that each one of these descriptions is something that LCCC takes pride in making sure that we have the resources for anyone who needs them.

MUSIC: 3:56 (Inaudible)

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: 4:00 Now that we shared a lot of different definitions but also how LCCC defines equity at the college. I'm going to provide you with some examples of programs and services at LCCC that support the work of equity. Kionna would you share some examples for us?

KIONNA MACINTOSH-PHARMS: 4:15 is an area that we certainly do well. So, I'll start with something called the ARC which stands for Advocacy Resource Center. They help students to access food, counseling, financial, and other resources. We also have something called in MVP, which stands for Mentoring Vibrant People of Color. A mentoring program geared towards our minority student population to affect change for students in three keyways: building social capital, increasing motivation, and creating network opportunities. Likewise, SAIL- Students Accelerating in Learning program. This is the support program for real students with real world obstacles. They are providing financial and academic support to help you graduate with your associate degree within three years. We also have student clubs and organizations. Things such as Thrive, Los Unidos, Black Progressives. All of these are affinity groups for students who may feel like they identify with. And I would be remised if I did not include my particular position here at the institution. And that is the student services navigator. Where I have the blessing of assisting the president and vice president with student concerns complaints or grievances. I help students to navigate through our policies and procedures and resolve their concerns. It proves that Lorain County Community College is very adamant on helping their students succeed.

MUSIC: 6:00 (Inaudible).

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: 6:05 Personally, I've benefited from a lot of similar programs and resources that help me to achieve my academic goals. I wish I would have had some of these opportunities when I was in college. I actually pursued my

undergraduate degree, first at the University of Akron. At the time I was already a student parent. I really needed help to make sure that I could attend my classes. At the time, I was still living at home, so my mother was my support system in terms of babysitting my young son. That was critical for me. But when I got married and moved to Northern Virginia and became a military wife, I needed a daycare support to be able to continue my studies at George Mason University. It is absolutely critical if I did not have childcare support, there would be no way that I would be able to attend classes. As a matter of fact, one of the stories that I've shared before with individuals and one of my challenges was initially, I had an in-home daycare provider. I took my son Trevor home and she babysat him during the time I was in school and also working on campus. However, one day she was sick, and she couldn't watch my son. So, I packed him up and decided to take him to class with me. At the time I was majoring in English and this was an English Literature course, and they have compositions. And I that I was sitting in a backroom I had a coloring book, crayons, snacks and stuff to keep him quiet. And he was talking a little bit, but in a low voice and I did have to shush him a little bit, just to remind him that we were in class. But I was mortified when the professor told me flat out, she said, "Look he's cute you but you have to leave class." It doesn't sound like something that would be devastating but it really was. I felt embarrassed having to leave class and I just I felt very defeated. As if, you know, the professor was not able to accommodate just that one time when I had brought him to class. Which I had never done before. So, for me, having the support as a student to have a daycare that has a high-quality program that was also able to help my son stay on track and certainly achieve his academic goals was really important to me. If I did not have that support, there is no way I've been able to earn my undergraduate degree and I did that within the traditional four-year timeframe as well. It also was the critical for me in Graduate School. I had my second son in Graduate School and even with my first son, I had to have daycare, after school care, to be able to again achieve the academic goals that I had, and also make sure that he had a quality experience. If it weren't for that, there is absolutely no way that I could ever achieve my goals.

MUSIC:

8:46

(Inaudible).

KIONNA MACINTOSH-PHARMS: 8:50 I'm going to have to say for me, I benefited in a number of ways, but for the purpose of this particular podcast I am going to share that I became a divorcee and one who had overcome domestic violence. And I found myself a single parent and it was really difficult for me to provide what was necessary for my children and for our lively hoods. While also deciding that it was time for me to expand my education. So, had it not been for Pell grants, scholarships and even the Office of Student Life, which provided me resources outside of the classroom. I don't know if I would be here today. Because those aspects from the financial ground and this was prior to some of the resources that we now see within higher education institutions. Having those, having that financial assistance really paved the way because it allowed me to utilize the Pell Grant on things that were approved like housing and transportation. And those things can lack in particular areas depending on where you live. The scholarships of course, had to pay my tuition which then which then allowed me to utilize the Pell Grant on the things that I needed. To make sure that we kept a roof over our heads and transportation to get to where we needed to to get to. The life outside of the classroom helped to keep me balanced. Some people would call it extracurricular activities. Help me to just have a moment to just think for myself, not for a classroom to complete an assignment, not as an answer to my children. Everybody succeeds if they have that "me" time. So, having that outlet outside the classroom really did help me to be a successful student.

MUSIC 10:53 (Inaudible).

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: 10:58 I think it's really important for people to hear to that financial assistance, whether it's Pell Grant, other scholarships, loans. Another forum that was really critical for me and for a lot of people is the student work study. So typically, if you're eligible for Pell Grant you're eligible for federally sponsored student work-study opportunities. And for me, that was critical because I really couldn't go leave campus and then go to another job that was off campus. For me, it was important to have a job on campus. So, I worked in so many different offices at George Mason University. *It* was first one was Financial Aid. Most people are afraid, but I was in that office all the time because

I needed financial aid and I really wanted to other students who were trying to figure out how to finance their education. Try to fill out that FAFSA form which was crazier back then it's a little bit easier now but it's still crazy. So, that was my first campus job. The interesting thing about it is that that's what actually led me to a career in higher education. I love working on a college campus and I love helping students. So, my jobs ended up being Financial Aid, the library, Career Services, alumni affairs. You name it. I think I was in an office doing something. It really changed what I was thinking about for career. Those jobs are important not only from support standpoint but also just it actually helped me develop as a person. As a professional, thinking about what I would like to do after I graduated.

MUSIC: [12:28](#) (Inaudible).

KIONNA MACINTOSH-PHARMS: [12:34](#) Although I wasn't a student worker, I did participate in Student Senate. And Student Senate although considered a part time position, really helped me again to have that life outside of the classroom. But it also helped me to learn about the resources, the benefits that we offer to students. And so, it has been a blessing to start in that particular area. Student Worker students that however it is playing, I agree with you wholeheartedly, that you don't know when they say college is the area that helps you decide what you're gonna do for the rest of your life. That is so true! Being a nontraditional student coming to Lorain County Community College that is exactly where it's at I thought that I had all of it worked out and that I knew I wanted to be until I came here and was to share some of my life experience. Some of my professional work experience from the past and just be the example that I wish to see. I was able to do some things that I didn't realize I was doing. I was able to impact in ways that I didn't realize I was able to do. Again, I wholeheartedly agree with you that this is was start, the beginning and the future for me. The resources, without them, without the lens of providing the resources under equity, I would not again be where I am today. I am so grateful, so thankful.

MUSIC: [14:15](#) (Inaudible).

KIONNA MACINTOSH-PHARMS: [14:20](#) This has been an awesome awesome discussion. I wish that we could keep going on. So, we hope brings you some clarity to what we mean by equity and why the work of equity is so very important.

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: [14:36](#) Thank you for joining us for this episode of the Voices of Equity Podcast at LCCC; brought to by Boom Radio.

MUSIC: [14:44](#) (Inaudible).