

VOICES OF EQUITY PODCAST

JESSE DAY

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: (0:20)

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: (0:23)

Thank you for joining us for the Voices of Equity Podcasts at Lorain County Community College. We are your cohosts, Denise Douglas

KIONNA MCINTOSH PHARMS: (0:31)

And Kionna Macintosh Pharms.

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: (0:33)

As 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 students who are the reason for our work.

KIONNA MCINTOSH PHARMS: (0:44)

Today, we have Jesse Day. Jesse initially came to Lorain County Community College as a financial services specialist and then into an advising role. And

I am so happy to welcome him to the podcast today. Your role in advising is at the front lines of our student success efforts. How do you personally see your row contributing to equitable student outcomes?

JESSE DAY: (1:14)

When my role as an advisor is crucial to the overall experience and success that every student that I have will encounter. The advisor is the one that the student is trusting, to provide them with details, guidance and direction that they need in order to achieve their goals at the college. They truly look at me, in my opinion as the expert to tell them what classes that take, who to contact for various reasons, you know, given certain issues. I'm literally often the first and last person of communication for each student as they come through. So, because of that, if I am going to extra mile for one student, I'm going to go that extra mile for all my students.

MUSIC: (1:51)

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: (1:57)

Jesse, our next question for you really focuses on the fall enrollment data. We look at that data in a disaggregated way, meaning that we pull that data apart to understand who showed up at the college and who did not. By race, by age, by Pell eligible status. So, when we looked at our data, we saw that there was declines in enrollment for African American and Hispanic male students. This mirrored kind of the national data that we saw across the country. What do you think we can do to connect better with these perspective students and encourage them to enroll here at LCCC?

JESSE DAY:

(2:36)

We've got to meet them where they are. We've got to go to them. We often take the approach of sitting back and waiting for the students to come to us, to call us, to email us, you know each out on their own. And the truth of the matter is, many of them do not know how to do that. And even if they do know how you know there may be some other barrier that's preventing them from doing that. We've got to go to them where they are. We've got to go to their school. We've got to go to their communities, you know, not just that we're here but that we want them. You know there's a difference in making a person feel wanted. And that would go a long way with it. As a success coach, remember, one of our enrollment initiatives was that we held a high school enrollment, kind of like a pre-early enrollment for first students that were getting ready to graduate. But I feel like we could have always, always felt like we could have done more with it. We notified the counselor at, you know, at a specific school, and set up a date for them to come out and we would do everything in one day. So, we would, the student would apply. They would take their placement, test exam and then we would give them enrolled in you know, in in courses. I noticed overtime, though there was it was certain schools that we were targeting and doing that. e should have gone out to all of the schools. We should have gone out to those schools, especially in the African American and Hispanic communities. Many of those students they're eager, they want to go to college. Often a lot of them don't know how to make that happen. I feel like we could have done more, but we could do more to make that happen. So going forward, that is something that I would love to see us do. We offer CCP as a program which is a very good program. It's not too often that I see many African Americans students or Hispanic

students participating in CCP. We can do more. To reach those students in those schools,

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: (4:29)

LCCC has done a great job with dual enrollment, basically because of early college has really helped increase our numbers of African American Hispanic students. However, at the state level, the recent report that came out shows that we have a ways to go before we see equity. As to your point, within the CCP population. To what else do you think that you would like to see us do to increase those numbers, knowing that dual enrollment in CCP in particular is a huge equity initiative? In general, it helps kind of reduce those barriers. What is something else that you may wish to see us do?

JESSE DAY: (5:09)

We have to start with them very early on. I think often the error that many colleges make because that there they wait until the student is at junior and senior year status. We've gotta start targeting any students in 6th, 7th and 8th grade. The way that you do that is by communicating with their parents. Often the parents are just as eager about their child continuing their education, but they don't know how to go about doing it. And so, the one step that we can take aside from reaching out to the student is to the parent and educating and informing them of the process of college. Whether that means having financial aid information nights which is key. It's vital because many students don't know and don't understand how financial aid. If them or their parents had someone that could inform them of that, it can educate them to that. I think it would help to go along way. And you might be surprised to find

out that you just might end up getting a parent enrolled and coming to you as a student as well if you know if that situation presents itself.

MUSIC: (6:16)

KIONNA MCINTOSH PHARMS: (6:23)

And so, what you're talking about Jesse is a grassroots effort. And I think that is important and those types of efforts will help to enhance individual sense of belonging here, which is something that we talk a lot about. I think that a sense of belonging helps with someone like yourself who is a black male. When you talk about the sense of belonging, individuals need to see individuals that look like them. As a member of our Equity for Students team, we know that equity work is personal to our members. Every one of them is passionate about being on that particular team. And we're so grateful for them. But what would you share as your equity story and why equity is important?

JESSE DAY: (7:08)

In the moment. sometimes you're wondering, you questioning your why is this happening? Why is that happening? You know and you don't find out sometimes until years and years down the road. You know, but for me as a kid coming out of high school, I was told by my high school counselor that I wasn't going to college. And right from the beginning that was disheartening. As a young black man to be told that and then you're only option is going into the military. Being told that you left feel like what am I good enough at to do? Luckily for me I did have parents, I had other relatives were behind me were going to insist that I went to college. I ended up going to college at Bethune

Cookman College, and you know, and I ended up not staying there. You know, it was a wonderful experience, looking back on it. And I ended up transferring to the University of Kentucky. I started to realize that not everyone had my best interests in mind. Being there, I kinda had to learn in navigating my way through college myself. You know on my own. That was during a time where for a lot of colleges and universities, having you as a student was, you know, a financial business to them. So, the more errors you made the more money that he was going to make, because that meant the longer you were going to have to be there with them. It took a while for me to learn and to understand what it was that I was there for and what it was that I was supposed to be doing. I got connected with a gentleman by the name of Eric Brown. He was an advisor for a completely different program at the College of Business and Economics. But he saw the potential in me. And he saw you know what I was capable of, and he took me under his wing. He didn't have to. If you knew Eric or to know Eric, I came to know. He would go the extra mile for any and every student that went a long way. He became an advisor to me in so many different ways. At that point he was the first person that kind of showed me that I mattered in away in that regards. Of course, you have family members that tell you all the time that you matter, but you know it's different when you're hearing acceptance from others. So, for me, when I decided that I want to work in higher education, my goal was to ensure that every student encountered that kind of feeling. I wanted to make sure that I gave that feeling to every student right from the beginning, whether or not it turns out in their, you know, their benefit in the end. Unfortunately, not every student always is successful, you know, but they would at least walk away from here knowing that Jesse Day did his best and gave them his best. Equity matters in all areas. So, within higher education,

I feel like we have a duty and responsibility to ensure that every student walks in and out of here feeling that we genuinely want to see them. In our society, today where there are a lot of people being selfish, hurtful, where law enforcement is engaging in unfair and deadly practices. All people want is a fair chance at life and add being successful. And I believe that I can play a role in doing that and that we here at LCCC can play a role in doing every student.

DR. DENISE DOUGLAS: (10:03)

Thank you so much Jesse and thank you for sharing your story with us. We really appreciate your time today also want to thank our listeners for joining us for this episode of the Voices of Equity Podcast and LCCC brought to you by Boom Radio.

MUSIC: (10:18)