

Professor Tamu Chambers of Hudson Valley Community College to be Featured on Close Up Radio

ALBANY, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, May 31, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ --

The media has been covering the homeless crisis in San Francisco and how California is struggling for solutions. According to Thomas P. NiNapoli, Hudson Valley, NY's Comptroller, New Yorkers are also in need. "... 50% of income is for housing costs... While low-income renters are the most cost-burdened, these financial pressures are increasingly felt by middle class households."

Many Americans blame the underserved, saying the situations are a result of bad choices. Professor Tamu Chambers of the Department of Education and Social Sciences at Hudson Valley Community College

(HVCC) in Troy, New York, says individuals have not failed, society has failed. Homelessness is the result of a combination of socioeconomic and political issues. "Poverty and homelessness are caused by not having the appropriate opportunities or families, for example, being able to attend a good school. As educators, serving our students and the underserved community is our #1 job," explains Professor Chambers.

"Poverty is harmful and hurtful. I am blessed to teach students that just by bringing us together, knowing and respecting each other, we can work toward helping everyone live in a nice home. Through teaching, especially sociology and history, I have the opportunity to help my students find ways to be successful. Everyone can be successful with the right opportunities."

Professor Chambers has been educating students and community members for over 20 years. "Everyone should be doing more for individuals in our communities. It bothers me that we have



forgotten people—people who live in poorer communities, people struggling to get an education, struggling to get to college because they don't have a car. At HVCC, the faculty does a great job, and I want to do more. Some students are struggling with the basics, like with food.”

For this reason, Professor Chambers founded Sisters In Sync, a platform for students to have direct access to her so they can deeply analyze each student's situation. “It breaks my heart when I hear a student say, ‘Oh Professor Chambers, this is really great. Now I have enough money to come to class for the next two weeks.’ Our young people are going through a lot by not having enough food and adequate housing,” shares Professor Chambers.

Shortly after Hurricane Katrina, she spearheaded the difficult task of bringing Sisters in Sync to New Orleans. Explains Professor Chambers, “Some thought the trip would be dangerous. Of course, it wasn't because after the flood most people had left. So with our pastor, I contacted CNN and brought our students down to the poorest areas. What struck the students the most were the homes with an X's (homes where someone had died). It was heartbreaking. Before we left, each student wrote a short story about how they felt when they saw the conditions.”

When Sisters in Sync returned, everyone at HVCC was surprised at the level of poverty. “I was able to convince HVCC to allow us to create Katrina's Closet. For anyone looking for a job, the Katrina's Closet project helps with the proper clothing and makeup. I also help with resumes.



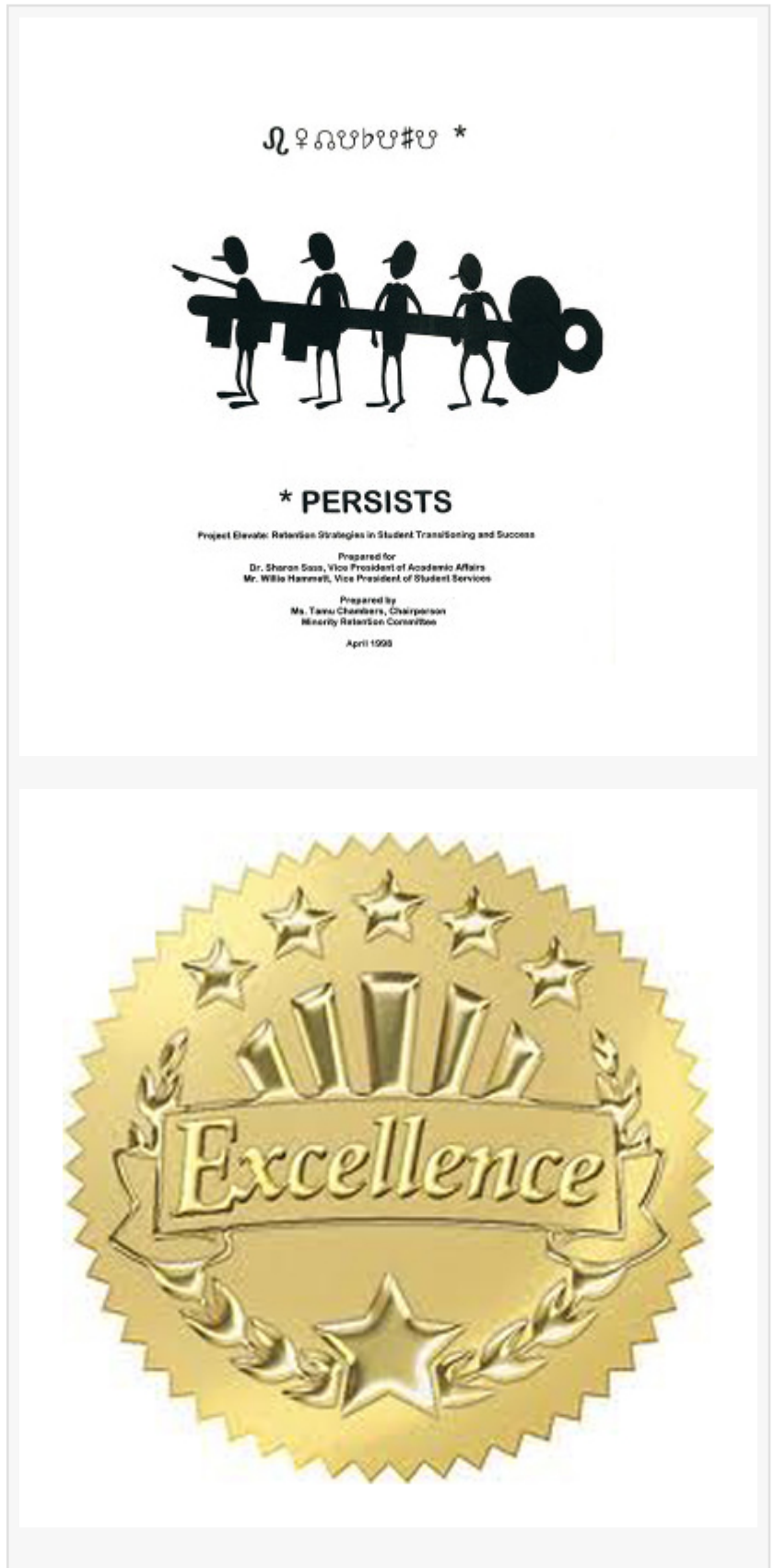
That is the power of teaching—helping students understand others’ struggling and teaching students all they can do to help. Society just doesn’t do enough. Katrina’s Closest has been a bit hit, we have written up in the media and helping students get those jobs.”

According to Professor Chambers, latchkey children are very much alive and well in 2024. “These children go home, and there’s no one there, no food because they have a single parent working. So, these kids wait for a single parent, brother, or sister to come home. Many are overlooked because they’re not told or encouraged or being taught, here is what you can do.”

Professor Chambers is working very hard to help everyone in the community understand the issues that many of these young people are facing. “These kids cannot help being born poor, they cannot help when they have health issues. There are a whole host of reasons why many are not successful. The more that we know as educators, the more we can help them to be better citizens. When I meet someone who wants to do more and doesn’t know how to begin, I find similarities I have with that person and that’s a wonderful thing.”

Dr. Chambers feels the biggest hurdle to helping the underserved is the pursuit of titles, trophies, and trinkets. “Too many of us are looking for awards instead of looking for ways help someone else.”

With a list of impressive titles, trophies, and trinkets, Professor Chamber’s greatest reward is her life’s work. “What happened after 9/11 was a tragedy. I was at SUNY and our Muslim students



were being treated very badly by some teachers... those kids were certainly not terrorists, terrorism was not part of their religion, and they also hated Osama Bin Laden. Consequently, 2 students knocked on my door looking for help. Although I was already working with Sisters in Sync, I could not refuse seeing how serious the situation had become. To have their religion torn apart, to have teachers making negative comments... in fact, by working with them, some assumed I was also Muslim. No, I am Baptist and that's not going to change. Together, we were able to shift the entire community and our campus, which was far more rewarding than receiving titles, trophies, and trinkets."

Professor Chambers adds, "I am a better teacher because I investigate what's happening instead of listening to what others are saying. For example, to better understand the LGBTQ community, I spend time there and get to know them. Instead of being afraid, getting to know one another on a deeper level is how we will succeed. Students need to know about and investigate adversity, and how to be polite to each other. I don't want my students to think the way I do, I teach them how to think on their own. Having a decent conversation today is becoming more and more difficult. When my students leave, they have also learned how to have polite conversations."

Professor Chambers has received many titles, trophies, and trinkets (too long to list), and is the author of 4 best-selling books. "Understanding and Overcoming Adversity," "21st Century Anthology: Higher Education, Pride, Purpose, and Passion," "KWANZAA, A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture," and "An American Tragedy: Katrina's Closet," are all available on Amazon.

Close Up Radio will feature Tamu Chambers in an interview with Doug Llewelyn on Tuesday, June 4th at 11:00 am EST

Listen to the show on [BlogTalkRadio](#)

If you have any questions for our guest, please call (347) 996-3389

For more information about Tamu Chambers and Hudson Valley Community College, please visit <https://theprofessorschambers.com/>

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