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SPOTLIGHT HEALTH 2018

Report Card: How Do Colleges Score on Student Health Needs?

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FEATURING:
Paula Johnson
Dan Porterfield
Samhita Mukhopadhyay

Interviewer: Hello, hello. We are in for a treat tonight. Again, welcome to How To Score ... How Do Colleges Score On Students' Health Needs. I just messed up my entire introduction because I was like, "This is a late night session, so we're going to be talking about sex and drugs," just maybe not the way you might think. I'm delighted to be here. Teen Vogue, obviously is ... As you can tell, I'm a teen. No.

It speaks to a younger generation of people that are grappling with health needs in a really unique and special way. And so, I'm really excited to be moderating this panel and to be really thinking about, what do colleges need to provide for the health needs of young people right now? And so, it is my honor and pleasure to introduce two people that have really worked in this space and have really pioneering expertise to share with us today.

To my right is Paula Johnson. She's the president of Wesley College. Until 2016, she was the founding executive director of the Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology, chief of the Women's Health Division at Brigham and Women's Hospital, professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, and professor of epidemiology at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

In her free time, I'm just kidding. A cardiologist who advances the wellbeing of women. She's a member of the American Academy of the Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Medicine, and was named one of the top 25 women in higher education and beyond by Diverse magazine. TED called her 2013 TED Talk, one of the top 10 TED Talks by women. Please welcome Paula Johnson.

To her right is Dan Porterfield. He is the new president and CEO of the Aspen Institute. With a career on promoting education equity and poverty prevention. In 2011, he became president of Franklin & Marshall College where under his tenure, the college tripled the percentage of Pell Grant eligible students and reduced student indebtedness. He was also the senior vice president and English professor at Georgetown University, and senior aide to former US Health and Human Services Secretary, Donna Shalala.

He's been honored by the Kipp Foundation, I Have a Dream Foundation and the Posse Foundation, and the Obama White House named him one of 11 champions of change for college opportunity. Welcome.

Dan Porterfield: Thank you.

Interviewer: Dan, you became known for a fairly controversial move you made as president, where you kind of learned firsthand how students live on campus. Can you tell about that?

Dan Porterfield: That was actually my senior vice president days at Georgetown where supportive and total partnership with my wife, Karen Hurley, who was an attorney, a public interest attorney, and our three children; Elizabeth, Caroline,

who's the audience in the red, and Sarah, we moved from our nice little two bedroom, Arlington home into a dormitory of Georgetown University where we lived for eight years amongst students and fully immersed in campus life 24/7. Loved it. Loved it.

Interviewer: So, Paula, you have been at Wellesley for two years-

Paula Johnson: And I haven't been living in the dorm.

Interviewer: And you haven't ... They're paying you enough to live off campus.

Paula Johnson: It's a requirement. So you have to live ... It's a requirement of the job.

Dan Porterfield: Exactly. It's in the contract.

Paula Johnson: We have to live in the presidents house.

Interviewer: So what have you, in the two years you've been there, what are the major health crises that your students are facing?

Paula Johnson: It's, and this is something that our students at Wellesley or facing, but I know Dan, you saw the same thing at Franklin & Marshall. Across the country, we're seeing very high rates of depression and anxiety. And the mental health issues are really kind of front and center, and some of the numbers are just staggering. Some of the most recent numbers, 39% of college students are basically saying that they are experiencing depression severe enough that it's affecting your functioning.

Or over 60% experiencing overwhelming anxiety. And then there are also students who come to us with chronic illness. I look at it as the success of medicine, in many ways because students who never would have been able to make it to college, whether it's Wellesley or a community college can now get there. But we aren't really prepared, and we're also not prepared for a newer generation with these levels of mental health issues.

And we have to figure out ways of really addressing this on our campus, in addition to all the other issues we'll discuss today; drinking and other issues on campus.

Interviewer: So just to play devil's advocate, and you speak to the higher levels of mental health issues. We had talked earlier, it could potentially be a mental health awareness. Why does a college have a responsibility? Historically, when we talk about mental health, it's a personal issue, right? It's like, "Go talk to your therapist or talk to your priest, talk to your family." Why do you feel the university has a responsibility?

Paula Johnson:

Well, it's a good question. I do think that we've gone through a period of colleges and universities asking themselves that question, and where does their responsibility again and end. And my feeling is that we are here to educate the next generation of young people. And part of that education is to also ensure that they are as healthy, both physically and emotionally, that they can be. It is part of the full package. It is what is going to allow them to make a difference in the world.

And obviously, we're not a hospital, we're not a healthcare facility, although we have healthcare, but I do strongly believe that it's our responsibility to really address this in a scientific way, understand where we can develop evidence. Right now, the evidence is almost nonexistent of ways to approach these issues that are not just about service delivery, but that are about wellness, that are about prevention. I like to always say taking a public health approach. I do think it's up to us to navigate the way forward.

Dan Porterfield:

Can I take a shot at that too? And thank you. It's great to be with Paula. My subscription to Teen Vogue expired a while back, but I understand it's really been really developed a new ways in order to speak to this generation of young people on the issues that really matter. And congratulations. Obviously very courageous to do that. We have on our right, most of the interns who are working at the Aspen Institute the summer.

I put out a tweet the other day, I said, "My interns are greater than your interns," because this is a fantastic group. They're all in college. And so, maybe you all will come up with some questions and some thoughts and reflections as this panel goes on. But I think, I sort of have two thoughts about this question about what's the role. The first one is that it do you have a conception of the human being as a whole person? Meaning a person who has many talents and backgrounds and gifts, who has an emotional component, who has an intellectual component, has a family, has a culture, is a collection of potentiality.

If you see a student as a whole person, then as Paul was saying, you have to step forward and say, "Well, how can I help that person develop wholly and fully?" That's one thing. Secondly, if you said, "Well, I just want schools to focus on the classroom. I just want them to learn study skills and research skills and public presentation skills," and then I'd still say, "You still have to think of what's enabling great learning and what is blocking great learning.

And if you're not addressing the things on students' minds and the challenges that they're facing, then they're not able to progress intellectually the same way. So either way, and what I think is really exciting about this generation of kids, is that they want to be in partnership with the adults and the educators. It's a positive mentality from start. Let's do something together. And so, the schools like Wellesley or like Franklin & Marshall, we're really able to partner with our students.

We haven't figured it all out nor have they, but we can be partners together to try to figure it out.

Interviewer: Paula, you've talked a lot about on to what Dan is speaking to you, this idea of community and creating a community. How do you think about that, and what role does social media play on that? Because sometimes it feels like we have a community, but then you put the phone away and you may not feel like that anymore?

Paula Johnson: Well, as Dan said, we've got a lot of young people in the audience and we're going to want to hear your voices on this, but it's something that we have to really think about and take a step back and understand, what is community in the 21st century? It surely isn't a year younger than Dan and me, but it surely not what it was when we were in college. And it's very clear to me ... Part of the beauty of what we've been able to do on our campuses is actually to bring this tremendous diversity of students to our campuses.

So whether it's race and ethnicity, first gen, sexual minorities, we can go on to the various groups of students. And it's a time in life when our students are developing their multiple identities. So, the way you develop community is intersectionally across those identities, within those identities. But then what is that more collective community, what does that mean? And I'm thinking about it particularly from a residential college perspective. How do we create those communities, particularly when there is the world of social media?

And so at Wellesley, this is really one of our major undertakings or will be over the next year with our new student life leadership, but also connecting as Dan said, connecting with our faculty because it isn't as though you leave the classroom and you go from one threshold to another, it's one continuum. And so, our students will be involved, student life and our faculty. So we'll be figuring it out. The only thing I'm sure of is that right now we don't have the answer.

Dan Porterfield: With that, so social media was the question. I think it's fair to say that social media can be used for good or for ill. There's a lot of good that you see when people are distributing ideas to one another, building community, reinforcing each other's achievements and celebrating them or having fun together in a way that helps people connect. There is a lot of power, but there's also the downside. Similarly, with like socializing with alcohol. Socializing with alcohol is something that people do in this country by the hundreds of millions.

And someone has to learn how to do that one way or another. There are ways when you can use alcohol while socializing that are fine, and there's ways that are dangerous. Stress. We experience stress all the time in our work lives and in our family lives, in the balance of it. Feeling of tress can actually be somewhat sometimes at minor level, you regulate it, you learn how it is, it can power you a little bit, but if you don't learn how to deal with stress, then it's going to cause all kinds of actual negative health outcomes.

And then things like anxiety and depression. Very present, Very present among all of us. Among adults and young people of every age. This isn't a young person problem or something, kids are a collection of assets. But we can learn how to regulate our emotional burners. Depression or anxiety can be something that a person experiences that they someday feel as part of their power, but they've learned how to regulate it. It's not just going to happen without some education.

Paula Johnson: Yeah. It's interesting, Dan, because you're talking about learning how to do that. A former colleague of mine who runs a very large program at Mclean hospital, which is one of the big academic psychiatric hospitals in Boston. She's come up with this idea of emotional preparedness. There's so much focus for our high school students, having them check off every box for what they need to do to get into college, and particularly a good quality college.

There is so much stress put on that, and for certain families, not all, there's a lot of stress involved with very little attention to their emotional preparedness. And her theory, this is definitely [Pender Amacher 00:13:44] how do we begin to really think about how we focus on their academic preparedness, but also their emotional preparedness as they are launching into college. And I think we're going to have to pick that up.

Dan Porterfield: Here's a question, and I'll answer it too. I wonder, how do you think you developed your emotional preparedness, way back when you were going through some of those same things. I'm sure there were moments, because you're such a high achiever, you must have really put a lot of pressure on yourself.

Paula Johnson: It was different and I think I failed. There were certain things I wasn't good at. I learned how to work with people, I learned how to study with people, I learned how to have ... we had relationships, there was kind of ups and downs. It's a very good question, but I think today, there's far more focus on just purely the academic preparation. I do think, we're as a society, it is not serving us well.

Dan Porterfield: One thing that I'm excited about, if we look a little bit too promising practices or potential solutions At my school, Franklin & Marshall College, we completely remade our residential system and moved from a dorm system to we call college house system, with each of five college houses having particular themes and traditions. A faculty member who became the Don, economic and personal advisors in the house, seminars held in the house.

We were able to find that that created a more as a norm in the residential experience, especially the first year experience, as a norm, gathering up for social events that were like welcoming, programming that got kids out of their rooms, lots of different kinds of programming. Each house has its own student government. You're in the government. One's like a republican and one's like an assembly of peers.

They're all different, but everybody's has a little bit of self governance. And incredibly Franklin & Marshall College was able to significantly improve the level of a risky drinking by first year students through that innovation. It wasn't directly targeted on drinking, but it was about the environment and the ecosystem within which students experience college. I wouldn't say we've crossed the finish line yet, there's things we need to do, but that was one promise-

Paula Johnson: I think it's a really good ... One thing that is important in that, the fact that adults are appropriately engaged with students. And the more I talk with our students at Wellesley, that engagement with adults is something that is welcomed, again, to your earlier point and there's a way in which that socialization is a real growth experience. Exactly. So I think that there is really an important ... That's an important model of getting adults, not in a parental way, but in a, "How do we navigate in society, with each other as peers, but also with adults?"

Dan Porterfield: The two of us, we share this huge value together of liberal arts education in a residential campus where students and faculty mix it up together. And I do think, I really do feel that that's as good a model as ever been invented for education.

Interviewer: That is correct. And it's interesting because I went to a state school, and so didn't get ... It was like going to school in the city with 20,000 students. And even at that point 20 years ago, binge drinking was a huge problem on campus. I don't remember there being a ton of resources, I'm sure there were efforts, but overall it was actually a really big problem.

How are you grappling with this at an all women's college and how were you grappling with this at ... ?

Paula Johnson: It's interesting, we do ... There is drinking, to be honest, it's not the same as on a coed campus. There are various events where we know there's going to be heavy drinking. Marathon Monday for example, is a big deal at Wellesley. Everyone goes through something called the scream tunnel, and it's historic at the school. And we were seeing some of the things that we talk about where there's football. At tailgate parties people are preloading and drinking prior to going, we were seeing that prior to the marathon.

and we really had to, I'm just giving one example, had to really work on how we not only educated our students, but also how we thought about providing other opportunities for engagement and active engagement from the morning, all the way through the evening. And it was very, very helpful. We went from several transports to the hospital to none.

I think that that's only one event, it's not the culture. We actually did a little bit more with the drinking that occurs when our students leave the campus, and so

we have a lot of education to do around how to think about drinking once you are off campus and also all of the parts about healthy relationships and all of the things you can imagine; sexual assault, etc. that happen much more frequently under the influence.

Dan Porterfield: I worked on this both as senior vice president and faculty in residence at Georgetown and then as president of Franklin & Marshall college. Let me say first that one thing that Georgetown did that was exciting was that we formed this big group of students, faculty, staff of all different types, alums, to try to get at framing the issue. What framing was it? Students perceived at school had framed it as, "Hey, just don't drink till you're 21, period."

And the school proceeded as, students just want us to look the other way. And so that was really causing all kinds of friction, and students were basically at Georgetown fighting for the right to party, to quote a song.

Interviewer: From the 90's by the Beastie Boys.

Dan Porterfield: We need to break that. We need to break that logic, and the administration had to loosen up and be creative and open to more. Without going through all the details, we developed a grant that had got some funding to allow faculty to teach facts about drinking in their classes. We liberalized some of the campus drinking policy so that more parties would happen on campus, where it's safer, and we developed a social marketing campaign where we shared with students what the things like in safe settings for them, what the actual statistics were, what the actual risk were.

Because a lot of kids think everybody's quote, 'doing it'. And then we had some success. I think Franklin & Marshall had a little more success numerically, according to the data, by restructuring its house system. We also created Franklin & Marshall though, a group called .08 student led group whose focus is to educate peers about safer socializing. Not to say don't drink, but to help them learn some of the ways, to know their limits, introduce food and water into parties, or to not have sort of like bedroom doors closed off or something, how to keep the party down in one area.

What I think from those two experiments basically, is that would go a little further. And my belief actually is that the 21 drinking age for beer and wine is outdated. No college president should or can take a-

Interviewer: All your interns are cheering right now.

Paula Johnson: You need to repeat what you just said, that no-

Dan Porterfield: No college president can or should take a position on this, but this is my thought, that the 21 drinking age for beer and wine is too high. And that what we should do instead is create a learners permit framework for beer and wine

for 18 year olds. I guess you're imagining what it would have been like. I think then if I could serve legally in my pub on campus beer and wine to students who are holding the learner's permit, I could actually have all kinds of ways of doing the educational work of being present as opposed to hoping that what's happening in pregameing and settings where I'm not is okay.

I've got my campus police there, I got my RAs there, and I could take away the learner's permit if students broke the rules or drove with any alcohol in their system. We may yet see if the Aspen institute can convene a conversation where other people besides presidents get introduced to the conversation, because I don't think it's fair to ask presidents to stand up in front of their student bodies and their legislators and try to propose something this out of the box. But I think that could actually make a difference, done well.

Paula Johnson: One thing that, Dan, you said that that is very important. We hear it on our campus and I know that it exists on others, the university campuses near us, which is that as we've shifted the drinkinG off the campus, social life has gone off the campus. And so, you're absolutely right, and we are doing this as well, figuring out ways to bring social life back on campus in a way that you don't have to go through a number of hoops in order to do that, to make it easier to convene, to have parties, to basically have fun.

And we've seen what that does with various clubs, with the Greek Life and how that actually has led to very significant rates of binge drinking and all the behavior that comes with it.

Dan Porterfield: See, I think with the Greek Life question, when Greek Life on some campuses has something of a monopoly on the social life because they have the settings, they have the music, they have the parties and you can't have other parties elsewhere, it actually puts too muCh pressure on that one group, and it would soften at all a lot if we could let more kids have more parties. Again, I realized that my context is a little different because I'm out of the role, and also at a women's college, there's different dynamics too that you're probabLy thinking.

Interviewer: Dan, I do think to your point, the rate at which college drinking is an epidemic, I do think it is time for us to start thinking about radical solutions even if it's in the ideation phase. And I can say that as working with so many young people or hearing from so many young people that either feel pressured to drink and they don't want to or are participating in this activity.

Paula Johnson: The numbers are just, they are staggering. If you ask college students the last time you drank what percentage drank over five drinks; for women, it's over 50%. And for men it's over 60, 70%. And if you go up to like seven drinks, it is like 30% for men, and I don't remember the number for women but that ... Imagine, at one sitting, seven drinks. And for five, we're talkinG about drunkenness.

Interviewer: What do you think ... And do you think it's because it's illegal, is that what's causing all the binge drinking or do we have any early research or data? Is it the depression? Is that the anxiety? Is it the pressure to fit in? What do you think?

Dan Porterfield: Well, I do think college students have been drinking something alcoholic, whether it was ale or some broof in the middle ages for as long as there's been college. That's part of growing up, but I think, I'll stretch it a little bit, but I do think that some among us of every age, absolutely, my age peers of mine are medicating themselves for depression or anxiety with something. Might be alcohol, which is legal. It might be some forms of drugs which aren't, but a lot of people I think self medicate, they may not call it that or know it is that.

I don't know that I think that the drinking levels are dramatically different over the last 10, 15 years. That's actually why I'd like to really take a shot at seeing if we could normalize drinking with beer and wine in safer settings and see if that could and actually bring down the numbers, try it out and see-

Interviewer: And there is evidence to support that. That's how most of European countries ...

Dan Porterfield: Or the applications to the schools to get approved for the pilot program will go way up too.

Interviewer: I think peripheral to this conversation that's come up a few times now, some of the side effects of not just drinking on campus but I think another truly a public health epidemic is the rate at which women are exposed to sexual assaults in their college environment. We are in the middle of, as infamously discussed, a reckoning with the Me Too Movement and more and more women are coming forward and the numbers are even more staggering than we thought.

I think the last study I read, it was almost, I think one in four women are potentially exposed to some form of sexual abuse in their time in college. And this is something that I have done a lot of research and thinking on, especially as we think about college as a space for development and experimenting and really finding yourself. And we're talking about a large segment of the population that is exposed to danger or to potentially be stifled.

How are you thinking about this issue at Wellesley? How were you thinking about it?

Paula Johnson: Well, it is. It's a very significant problem. The rates of assault and also just exposure to abusive relationships, intimate partner relationships. And I think that we really have to get back to what is a healthy relationship and it gets back to that community question, how do we build community and in that, it might not only be the people you were living with in a women's college, but also what does that mean in terms of building healthy relationships?

And we're going to have to really get back to basics because I don't think we've really spent time on it. I don't think that there's time spent at the high school level, and what I love about Dan's model at Franklin & Marshall, there are also ways of modeling those behaviors in a living environment, which I think is extremely healthy. It's women, but I also want to clarify, it's also sexual minorities have extraordinarily high rates of assault, same as women actually.

It is a rampant problem. Part of it is the alcohol piece, but there's another component to this that we really have to work on. And then, if we think about too, some of the other aspects of harassment, we just did a panel this morning, we just published a big report on sexual harassment in the academy in STEM. And if you look for example, at some of what is going on university campuses with students, for example, medical students experiencing harassment.

This is everything from harassment to assault, coercion, big problem in our society, and one that's going to really require a major culture change. It's not going to be good enough to just get the quote unquote 'bad actors', it's a cultural problem that we're going to have to really work on. And there are strategies and ways that we can do that.

Dan Porterfield:

I'll say two things, but then we can talk more because you can never cover the hull and one answer. The first is just as Paula said, there's a lot of different phenomenon that all go into this category of sexual assault or sexual misconduct, and so some of the strategies for addressing depends on which manifestation we're talking about, i.e., some of it is about empowering people to develop healthy relationships, some of it is about conversation strategy in an intimate relationship and being able to talk to one another and listen.

Some is about social environment and expectations or norms that are prevalent, especially I think, make men think that it's fine to like hook up any way you can. That's the game. Some of it comes out of the context of occasionally, like relationship violence. Some is like the people experiencing something that they're not sure they want it, but they don't know how to describe it and they come back later to it again. There's so many things. Our strategies have to be responsive to all of it. That's point one.

Now, to make it simple I'd say, two good messages that we try to emphasize at Franklin & Marshall College that covers a lot of all that, is that you have to get consent for sexual behavior and every time, and for the progressive steps of it. Yesterday's consent doesn't mean tomorrow's consented to. We have to get consent and the people have to have the capacity to give consent.

That's like you've got to boil it down, emphasize with your friends and with your children, your grandchildren, those you care about, you have to give and receive consent and you have to have the capacity to give both parties capacity. Those two things cover a lot.

Paula Johnson: And the other thing Dan, is to empower those who are around you or maybe observing behaviors. Kind of the bystander type training, but the only thing about empowering our students that when they see behaviors to understand it, to name it and to know either potentially had to intervene in the moment, but how to get help.

Dan Porterfield: Yeah. Thank you so much. And this is evolving, you all, you're helping to bring about the evolutions. When I lived on Georgetown's campus faculty in residence, there are any number of times when I was out late at night and I saw kids drunk or heard them drunk in a dormitory, and sometimes it's students I knew. And every now and then I said to myself, "What's my role here?" I'm the educator, but I didn't have a vocabulary at that time called bystander intervention. That's only emerged.

I'm only now myself learning. Maybe you all know some good things, but for instance, at F&M, one of the ways we work on bystander intervention is that we get kids to agree to it before the party. There's even like a card system where I can give you the card-

Paula Johnson: Like a designated driver.

Dan Porterfield: Exactly. We learned it, we all learned it. But if you see me behaving in a way that I've agreed in a moment of sobriety is not how I'm going to behave or if your friend is in a position where your friend doesn't know how to negotiate herself out of the social circumstances she's in, how do we empower you to step in? And one way is to get agreement ahead of time that you'll step in at those moments and you give me the card and go back.

Interviewer: And early research about bystander intervention is extremely promising in terms of ... And I do think this speaks to the culture change piece. To those of you that may not have heard of it, was very popular a couple of years ago when Joe Biden made a big campaign called, It's On Us, about the role that men play in bystander intervention. And it really is about how a lot of people, most people actually, when they see something bad happening, they do want to do something. They just feel intimidated or they don't know the right things to say.

And so a lot of these programs teach people. "Okay, so you want to say something. What should you say in that moment?"

Dan Porterfield: I thought that Vice President Biden and President Obama overall made a very, very smart and good move in changing the standards and having a Title IX interpreted, so that now colleges have to demonstrate that we have in place a whole set of procedures that are more or less standardized across schools for when a notification must be made if you know of something for the followup, the timeliness of the followup, for empowering the claimant. There may have been a sexual assault with the choice making about how to proceed, for the

holding of hearings with panels that are trained and don't include students or coaches, to the nature of the sanctioning and the reporting afterwards.

And we're getting there as a country in my opinion. Every single school and I won't exempt myself, has felt uncomfortable about the process of trying to reach the standards because it's new work fast, but I actually believe across the board that we have a better more uniform set of practices in place around the country. And I can feel more reassured that most schools are reaching or have reached a reasonable standard, there's more work to do, but we've made a lot of progress. I don't know if that resonates with you or not as a health leader who-

Paula Johnson: I think we have absolutely made progress and with Title IX and Title 7 are absolutely critical for us, and they've provided the floor for us to now interpret. But we do have a lot of work to do just in terms of the more legalistic approach as opposed to really understanding the data and understanding what is it that the targets of either harassment or of assault need for them to get to the point of potentially reporting. So this is a work in progress, but the good news is, I think that we are getting there. And we'll recognize that we have a tremendous responsibility.

Dan Porterfield: Could I ask you to as the leader of one of the greatest colleges in the country, it happens to be a women's college. I have this intuitive sense that there's an environment where emphasizing women's empowerment, women's aspirations, women's control of their bodies and their lives, can happen in a single sex educational context for some people that's very empowering and preps very promising for how they might negotiate these things later in their lives. How do you think about that?

Paula Johnson: No. It has, Dan and thank you for that. A women's campus is fundamentally different. Just if you think about not only our students but also our faculty, our faculty are 52% women. So in the most male dominated fields are faculty or at least half women and that sets up just a dynamic in general, sets up a very different norm. And so the norms are different and therefore, the sense of self that develops ... you talked most Wellesley women and they will talk about, "It was the place where I found my voice. It was the place where I evolved, where I understood what I could do."

Not that that doesn't occur across all other campuses, but I think there's something very different about the way it happens and the agency with which our students gain those voices and confidence.

Dan Porterfield: Sometimes I feel looking at a school that has gone from being probably 70% male, 15 years ago, maybe 65% to now 56% women. Sometimes I feel that the males on the campus are not yet really stepping up at the level of aspiration and difference making and sort of societal roles they hope to play. And that there's a tendency and please, this is not all people, as to what some of the men in the audience are saying, there's a tendency for some men to be retreating into like

a bro culture, that's like sort of safe from the threat of engagement that maybe class springs or that simply being outnumbered by high achieving women can bring.

And I think that's got to be addressed. I think men like me have to try our best to be in dialogue with younger men so that we can together think about how can you work, if you're in a coeducational life, your life is coed, so how can you work in relationship with women in order to bring out your strengths and their strengths together. And I do see that retreat, a little bit. I really do. Some of the fraternity life is about a retreat into like ... And sometimes it becomes like a hyper maleness of retreat. We know we're men because we're all men being men right now. I'd like to try to continue to work on that.

Paula Johnson: Well, one of the other things that I've been hearing a lot is that the concern that they were ... One of the unintended consequences of the Me Too movement, will be that there will be a retreat from being willing to engage with women, that in many ways men might not or will be more hesitant to hire women. Now, I don't know if that's fact or fiction, but we have to be very clear that discrimination is not an answer to this issue.

Interviewer: I appreciate that point. To your point, Dan, I would say that if the news has taught us anything, toxic masculinity is a public health crisis as well, if we've learned anything. I wanted first to acknowledge how revolutionary it is that either of you were actually talking about this issue and I appreciate your optimism. From the reporting end, it does not feel like things are getting better. If anything, it feels like more and more stories are coming of administrations that are sweeping sexual abuse under the rug or they don't want to deal with it on their campus.

They think it's a personal issue or they might even blame the victim. And then I think what's happening with Betsy DeVos and Title IX is very troubling to me as well. How are you grappling with all of that?

Dan Porterfield: I would say that when Secretary DeVos announced there was a rethinking and that there could be a return to a lower standard of finding of responsibility, I then sent a letter to my campus saying there won't be a return. We have the option that we will keep the option of a higher standard, which we had actually before President Obama made the moves he made. Anyway, we asserted essentially institutional self governing authority to continue to have a higher standard. Well, with the lower standard for responsibility, the higher standard of punishment, or the higher consequences.

And so I don't know that the Betsy DeVos is going to help us on this issue very much. I just don't think that's likely. So schools, it's on us. We're going to have to continue to work at the level of policies, messaging, partnership with students, bringing research to the table to show what we know and to keep learning. And that's if it makes us uncomfortable, that's too bad. That's the responsibilities of leadership.

Paula Johnson: Dan, I couldn't agree with you more and I think that bottom line is we have to do the right thing and we have to do what the evidence today has guided us to. Underlying some of the questions about Title IX today or is this question as to whether or not we are being fair. That's really what's driving this. And I think as long as we create processes and procedures that are clear, transparent and fair to both sides, that we cannot turn the clock back. We have got to continue to move forward.

And quite frankly, as I said earlier, Title IX is just the base. Dealing with these issues from the Title IX perspective is the floor. What we have to do is really work on what is the culture that leads to this. I view it as, don't turn that clock back, but let's figure out how we're going to really move this agenda forward and do it pretty aggressively because as we can see, even with the execution of Title IX, in far more important ways, we are still dealing with these issues.

Interviewer: Thank you. The last question and then we'll open it up to the audience. I know both of you have talked a lot about wellness as a model for healthcare or for taking care of health. Can you elaborate on that a little bit? The difference between the health center versus moving to a model of wellness.

Dan Porterfield: In our context, after we created our college house system, we saw we made some progress. For us, the next step was to change the model of what was called literally the infirmary on campus, which was separate from the counseling services and we've created a new model where we partnered with nonprofit health system to create a new student center that integrated physical health, mental wellness and mindfulness together, with a lot of emphasis on group work as well as an individual work.

And I don't think we've figured everything out yet, but we dramatically improved our resources. More time for a psychiatrist available to our students, more counselors, more communication between the physical health and mental wellness staff, integrating now with the caregivers at home, if students get permission for that. All of which we weren't doing before. The driver of that, the change, which was a big one for the school, was that we wanted to focus on wellness.

We hired a whole wellness coordinator who tries to engage students in partnership to work on nutrition, physical fitness, sleep, and sort of giving them kind of accurate, effective information about things like opioids. I don't think we're there yet, but it's more proactive and less reactive and more in partnership with students than the medical model seems to imply.

Paula Johnson: I think that we have moved exactly in that direction, integrating mental health, the traditional health service and also thinking about wellness at a much more holistic level. For example, we are in the process of a significant change of elevating the person who's going to oversee health and wellness to a dean level. And we're in the middle of creating what that description will be.

The idea being that this is a better education, it's not an add-on, it is an integral part of the educational experience and it is part of what we need to enable our students to achieve in terms of the highest potential level of health and wellness. Resilience is one thing that I think this is a term that we use a lot. We don't yet know exactly ... We know what we mean, the question is, how do you produce it? And this is I think going to be an essential question. The world is changing rapidly, we've got many pressures in life and our students do. How do we create that resilience? To me, that's part of the wellness.

And then the last thing I'm just going to say is also just bringing it back to the diversity of our students. We have this enormous diversity and we have to make sure that the more traditional health service part, so both physical and mental, which are integrated because one breeds right into the other, that we have a workforce, we have providers that reflect our student population. Because without that, we're not going to reach them.

And the good news is that a lot of the stigma that had been present for so long, we're seeing that, I'm not saying it's gone, but it's fallen by the wayside to a great degree. So students want to access services, but we have to provide services that are culturally competent.

Dan Porterfield:

I can't help jumping on this point just to add something because Paula made me think about it when you said diversity. Our school, Franklin & Marshall College is known for a town strategy, by which we significantly invested in need based financial aid. Tripled the percentage of low income students quickly in the student body, drawn from a wide range of communities zip codes, that had the effect of almost tripling the domestic student of color population. It all happened fast.

And as it's turned out, our newer cohorts of students are achieving at or above school levels in everything; grades, retention rate, graduation rate, honors, scholarships, like off the charts are great, because they're so talented. But coming from low income backgrounds, and coming from some communities where they're underrepresented in larger society, families have developed all kinds of fantastic educational ways of reaching their kids and helping them strive for college and stay on track.

And so we found that binge drinking and other high risk behaviors are significantly lower among lower income kids at Franklin & Marshall College, significantly lower, which has a positive health effect for every student because it begins to show a different story, another example, another norm. And so, just something to think about, we get so locked into our mindset about who a college student is and what college is, then we go out and meet driven kids from modest backgrounds, taking their shot, sending a message to all of us that college isn't just a rite of passage for party. Nobody's more effective at sending that message to a 19 year old than another 19 year old.

Paula Johnson: Can I just add ... I know we have to go to questions, but I just do want to say one thing which is that, I cannot tell you how happy I am that we, the three of us who are here, talking about this and then we have people in the audience who are interested-

Dan Porterfield: We have people Look at the people.

Paula Johnson: Because this is an area where ... I started out by saying, we really don't have good evidence of what is ... There's some emerging, but we need to be very intentional about this. I think that we need to understand what the evidence is. We have to have a form of a collaborative to understand what you're doing at Franklin & Marshall, what I'm doing at Wellesley, so that we are not recreating the wheel every time. And that we have some infrastructure to begin to coordinate the data so that we can begin to say, "This strategy looks hopeful, that one does not."

And until we do that, we think about doing that in other areas of pedagogy and science. This really requires it and we need to take it to the next level.

Dan Porterfield: Possibly, also making Paul Johnson Secretary of Education.

Interviewer: Thank you both so much. We have time for some questions. I saw one hand in the back, it was the first hand I saw.

Speaker 4: I want to change the discussion a little bit because I think that one of the things that is ... and maybe you got it too, I didn't learn health, mental health, but one of the things that I find our kids are so oppressed by is stress. The stress of getting into college today is ridiculous. The stress to succeed is ridiculous. Academically, I think you raised it, Dr. Johnson. You see a bulletin boards on college campuses advocating yoga and depression therapy. And I'd love you to talk about sort of ... I think this is a very different situation than it was when I was in college.

The level of just stress which feeds into the binge drinking, but also everything else. The pressure we put on our kids to get in and succeed seems like something we've never seen before. And I'd love you to address that.

Paula Johnson: I'll just begin by ... There are a couple of things. First of all, you're you're talking about something critically important and we have to start before our students get to college. I will tell you there was a study done by Boston Children's, two years ago, that showed that 13% of high school students have experienced clinical depression. That's just not some sadness, that's clinical depression and the rates of anxiety are upwards of 70%. Now, if that's the case, what are we doing to our children?

I just want to get back to this idea of emotional preparedness, which is, if we begin as a culture to say it is as important that we develop you as a human

being and for what that means for the next stage in life. Developing strong relationships, understanding how to deal with disappointment and decision making, facing difficult decisions and things that you're facing in your life. This isn't for all students because there are students from different strata who have had to deal with these issues and have developed a certain level of resilience before they come.

But I think this whole notion of helicopter parenting has in many ways been toxic to our young people. And then the stress, the additional stress we put on them. Now, what do we do when we get them to college? This has got to be intentional. Some yoga or some meditation is not going to be the answer to this. We have got to really think, I almost call it a deprogramming. And it's going to require not only this notion of what is community, but how are the advisors, both the student life and the faculty, working with us to understand how we ratchet down the pressure.

And I'm going to say I don't have the answer, but what I can tell you, is that this has got to be intentional, because it's only adding to the treadmill, and what I'm seeing and for all of us who've had either children in college or who were in this in higher ed, these four years, if you are in a four year college, are critical to a student's development. And if they continue to only check the boxes through college and don't get off the treadmill, it is truly an opportunity for education development that's wasted. And then we're not doing our job.

I think that this is an important area and one that we need to really, again, take this very directed and scientific approach and measure. Let's look at it and then measure how we're doing.

Dan Porterfield:

That's the A plus answer. And to add one part to it, at Franklin & Marshall, we created a faculty center so that our faculty could have a place led by an expert, a leader in faculty development where they can develop their strategies for working with students to promote, I would just call it learning-centered classroom. And learning-centered classrooms don't always have to be the most work, you could possibly cram into that classroom.

I don't think we've achieved a revolution in faculty commitment, sort of like approach because it's very rigorous school. But we have been able to get a number of faculty to start to dial it back and be able to build more time for discussion and less testing and evaluation into what they're doing. That's one thing. And then the other thing I think is there is a societal work to do, I would say to encourage students to develop two resumes.

Everybody's got a resume to go get a job and to go get a headstart in life and they're sort of proud of that and that they think they're going to be judged by some standard out there based on their resume. And I'd like to think about a second resume that addresses four major questions. And those questions are; when did I experience joy? When did I experience difficulty and handled it? When did I grow? And when did I help someone else?

And students, if you write that resume, or develop that resume and fill in those boxes, someday another line will come up, it'll be purpose. Because you find a lot of purpose in life from that, and not just from going after the set of achievements that somehow make you a super [hoyer 00:55:03] or super diplomat or what's your mascot?

Paula Johnson: We don't have one.

Dan Porterfield: You don't have one. There it is.

Paula Johnson: You know what, I just want to say one thing on that, which is that I'm also a firm believer and I've seen this. Once again, I don't have the data, but my experience and the experience at the college that I've seen for in deeply engaging, not superficially, deeply engaging in service, it's transformational. For the just the reasons that you identified in terms of thinking about those four categories.

Dan Porterfield: Thank you.

Speaker 5: Hi. As a college student myself, one thing I do on campus is sit on a student mental health initiative and one of the main core components of that initiative is advocating for student resources to campus administration. And this past year, my campus administration started this strategic resource reallocation and really thinking at how they're spending their money, which is something a college is a business and that is something that's good to look at. But from a student perspective, one of the projects that are looking at is changing the structuring of our counseling center on campus and actually outsourcing it, which is scary for students to think about how that disproportionately affects students who might not have access to insurance.

Students of color, students of low income background, some of those from more diverse backgrounds you touched on. If you could just talk about balancing those interests and then also as a student, how to best interact with administration who it's sometimes feel is looking at how to make sure they're spending money the most efficiently.

Dan Porterfield: At Franklin & Marshall, when we moved to the model I described, we had to work through exactly those questions. It's critical to have in the process right up front, a partnership with students serving on the committees that are looking at the decision. That's the key. But we've made some mistakes in our process and the biggest one had to do with counseling. It wasn't so much the quote unquote 'outsourcing' because our employees all kept their jobs when they went to work for the new entity.

That was a part of the conditions. And in fact, they got more colleagues, so we were able to have more people, but we thought there might ... First of all, the question of insurance, we didn't handle quite right because some students felt that having to use their insurance, which they had, to pay for any services would

expose them to their parents knowing. And so we had made a misstep, we heard students say, "This isn't going to work for us," and so we changed course and instead provided every student, no matter what their insurance, no matter how wealthy they are to be direct, eight free counseling sessions.

And then they could decide if they needed something more long term, which may be a college isn't as easily positioned to provide for them, but instead of having one session to diagnose then start paying, we moved it to eight. And it was a student named Allie, who really did a great job bringing to the administration her thoughts and the thoughts of others in a way that was productive but also very principled. And we listened to her.

Paula Johnson: Dan, there's one very important point, you made many, but there's one point I just want to pick up on which is, in Massachusetts, we actually had a law passed that enables students who were on their parents' insurance to have privacy.

Dan Porterfield: That's amazing.

Paula Johnson: And I think for young people to think about that, there does need to be movement across the United States for that because it is a barrier. It's a barrier to care and now that ... It's a good thing that students can stay on their parent's insurance until age 26, but the privacy issue is important. and I'm very proud of that work because it does break that down, but if you have insurance from another state, it doesn't work that way.

Dan Porterfield: So there's something for students to think about from like an organizing in a political perspective-

Paula Johnson: Across the country.

Dan Porterfield: Yeah. What a great issue.

Interviewer: One over here.

Howard B.: I'm Howard [Bike 00:59:09] from Washington DC. I'm going to preface my question with, I think I'm a loving, supportive father of two recent college graduates and a college sophomore. This question may be embedded with my own internal conflict. Now that I've prefaced it, there's been a lot of work that's been publicized, Carol Dweck at Stanford and Angela Duckworth at University of Pennsylvania around grit, self reliance. And Dr. Johnson, you talked about your own personal story, which is sort of emblematic of grit and resilience. How do you strike the balance so that we're not ... I'm trying to put the words to it, the balance between grit and self reliance and creating a supportive, nurturing environment on our campuses?

Paula Johnson: Oh man. It's my strong belief that you can't have one without the other, that you cannot think that you are going to develop self reliance and grit in isolation

of having the environment that allows that to be nurtured and to grow. You have to have the safety to fail, the safety to make those mistakes. I know safety has become in many arenas a bad word. I think it's a good word. I think we should reclaim it for the importance that it provides on our campuses.

And that's what we should be doing; creating that environment that allows those experience because what better place than a college campus?

Dan Porterfield: That's a great question and I don't think it reflects an anxiety or anything, just a smart question. I'm working on a manuscript about meaning making in college campus. And one of my chapters is called the strivers, and I look at a number of students on this question of grit and resilience and try to get them to explicate for me, what did grit enabled them to do? In fact, one of my students, Louis Gerardo is here, his sister Carolyn, she's an incredible, incredible human being.

And what I have come to see is, at least a lot of students who've shared with me, that that idea of grit is one quality important one, but it's almost always grit plus. For example, one student's case, Nadia, it's grip plus humility because she finally realized it's okay to ask for help after having powered through obstacles her whole life. Another student, and I won't use her name, it was grip plus grief counseling, because she was holding onto grief from her father's death when she was in seventh grade in such a way that she was pounding her head up against the wall to just power through things because she was hurting so much inside.

And for another student, and this is Carolina, it was grit plus the freedom to step outside of the lane of medical and pursue rowing and art. And so I think grit's got a lot to offer, but by itself, how do we combine these great attributes people?

Paula Johnson: But I think it's very clear just from those three stories that Franklin & Marshall created that environment. It might've had different forms, but it was that enabling environment, it was the safe environment in which those students could develop each.

Dan Porterfield: That's the hope, isn't it? That's why you're doing this. That's why I'm doing this.

Paula Johnson: It is. It's wonderful.

Dan Porterfield: Exactly. Thank you.

Interviewer: This is amazing. There are so many questions. I think we have time for probably one more.

Dan Porterfield: I think we're competing against Leslie Odom right now. He's playing, he's in a concert somewhere. Right now, we have more people listening to us than Leslie Odom is.

Interviewer: All right here, right here and right here. Let's do that. Can we do that? And they're all questions, and they're quick questions? Okay. Great.

Speaker 7: You've both mentioned a lot about resilience and I'm curious if you guys have ever looked at Heart Math. It's a company that teaches resilience. Are you familiar with them?

Paula Johnson: No.

Speaker 7: It's a really great resource, but what programs do you have to implement to help with resilience with the children or with the students, I should say?

Dan Porterfield: I will just say one. One of our supporters, his name is Ken Melvin, a member of my board, made a seven figure donation to allow us to build a model to involve students as partners, who identify themselves as resilient and gritty, so that we could then, with them together, learn about the application of the grit and resilience they brought into the new setting of college. With one of our great professors, a psychology professor named Michael Penn, providing the cohesion and moderating several cohorts of students as we learn together from their experience.

And a big takeaway already, a really big one has been that if a student has strength and grit and perseverance of that type coming into school, it's very valuable for them to have a mentor to help them translate into the new setting. It's not just something that just happened, it's so much better to draw out of students how that might be used in the college setting.

Speaker 8: Hi, good evening. So as a recovering college student, I just recently graduated. This is something and it's very important to me. I also was a pre-med student myself, but in school, it was a very stressful time and there were a lot of things that I wasn't well equipped to deal with. Particularly with mental health coming from a Nigerian immigrant family and then also being like a male on campus. There were a lot of tendencies that were ingrained into me about mental health and mental fortitude which was detrimental at first.

Eventually I was able to overcome that, but my question is regarding stigma related to mental health on our college campuses. How do we overcome that stigma? How can we normalize this? How can we normalize seeing like a counselor on campus? Should we have semesterly mandated check-ins with a therapist? That way, all students are seeing therapists and it's not normalized on campus.

Paula Johnson: It's a really good question. I think that there are ways that ... It's a great question and there are ways of not only creating the sense of having to walk to the counseling center. There are now ways that we are implementing and it's happening on a lot of different campuses, where you can ... Everything from scheduling online so that you don't actually have to call and wait, to programs

that help you develop certain skills where you don't necessarily have to see a counselor to training and thinking about if you're in a residential college, what is the role of peers? How can peers be helpful?

There are peer counseling programs, there are programs and training those who are in leadership roles and various dorms. All of which says that this is an issue for all of us and there's a lot of work in training that goes into that. It's not the answer, but the more we can begin to just have those conversations and have multiple opportunities and choices and touch points, the more normalized it will become.

Dan Porterfield:

I like a lot the organization, Active Minds which are many campuses, that organizes all kinds of programming. And we have something called Outrunning Stigma race, that we are like a walking, running race. And there's a lot of work they do to hit that point. It is such a valuable reminder that students are coming from many cultural backgrounds. Immigrant students may be have families that have come from tradition for no one's ever gotten counseling before it's not part of what they do in their country.

And so for a student to even tell they want to get it, just that alone, to even know they want it, is a step. And it's almost like your question brings us full circle to how we started this panel, when you said, "Should we even be worrying about the whole person?" I think we have to worry about the whole person so that we can allow each one of us to tap our strengths and also to have the best possible academic formation. And if we don't attend to those questions, culturally responsive and thoughtful ways, as Paula said, with professionals from many walks of life, not just one background, we can keep moving the ball forward.

Interviewer:

I just actually want to add to that because I think that now that you've graduated, I think the stigma continues, right? Like I think that people ... there is a reluctance and I've often noticed a generational difference, where a lot of my employees are very comfortable talking about their mental health, what they're grappling with in the workplace. And I was really uncomfortable with it at first and now I'm like, "No, this is actually how you start to change the culture and you start to destigmatize. Oh, I went to my therapist."

It's like a totally normal ... In Manhattan, that's a totally normal thing to say, but it's a normal thing to say and I do think that like confiding in your friends, talking to your friends about it. And it is a huge line of coverage for us at Teen Vogue because of the stigma around it and providing resources so that when you do look up these issues, you can say like, "I'm having this experience and I don't really know who to talk to about it." And I think that starting to share those resources, but really talking to your friends and creating communities for yourself where you can openly talk about some of these issues is I think ...

Paula Johnson:

And given that you're going to go to medical school, this is critical. It is so important. It's important for you as a future physician to have that sense of self

and what it is you need to remain healthy because there was so many different pressures today that are leading to unhealthy behaviors and physicians, and very high rates of depression. And a recent study that was published last year in JAMA, 11% of physicians, this is a global survey, had suicidal ideation and almost a third reported depression. It's so critical as again, our young people to work on that holistic approach because they're going to go on and they need to bring that sense to the world.

Dan Porterfield: One thing we learned, and I think this goes across the board for all of us, how do we keep learning about all cultures, because the things that worked or a normal to approach a particular culture or maybe for that culture still works, but there's more cultures together. I have kids from 50 countries on my campus. We learned, for example, that the way we were talking about sexual assault awareness and prevention with women's students from some countries, was just overwhelming.

We were just flooding them with information that was like stuff they'd never talked about out loud, especially in a setting where there's all kinds of other people around they don't know. We just weren't culturally responsive and luckily, we listened and we've made improvements for that. But I do think that your ability to stand on a bridge in a sense, drawing upon all the strengths and practices that you lived, your family lived in Nigeria and now you're in an American context, you actually have a ton of insight and power to share with others that will help more than kids from Nigeria, help kids from everywhere.

Interviewer: Last question.

Speaker 9: Thank you. I'm a psychologist and I write about issues like this for Psychology Today. And it seems with the elevated suicide levels, depression, anxiety, mental health issues arriving on campus. Something new needs to happen in orientations in order to orient students to be on campus, to be in this very diverse environment, to be able to deal with conflict, to be able to deal with the difficult things that happen, including speakers that they disagree with, ideas that they find unpleasant. But it also seems like that they need more help in dealing with these things without being emotionally reactive.

But instead of getting that help, there seems to be more encouragement on the part of a lot of administration and faculty to feel more harmed, to take words as injury. Even talking about words as violence. It seems to me like this is pretty bad for kids' mental health when they really need to be learning to grapple more competently, with more resilience, they're being treated like they're more fragile. What do you think we can do to reverse that course? I know Wellesley has had some pretty significant issues in this realm with speakers coming to campus who are disfavored and felt-

Paula Johnson: I just want to clarify, Wellesley, we have not had any shouting down or closing down of speakers.

Speaker 9: No, that's true.

Paula Johnson: We had actually, I'm very proud of what happened at Wellesley in fact, what we had was controversial speakers and the one that made it into the news the most, the students organized and did a very respectful talk back.

Speaker 9: I was just thinking more in terms of the professors, the professors who treated the students like the letter that the professors wrote, talked about words as causing injury and causing harm. That's the concern that I have. The students can only be expected to do what the students do.

Paula Johnson: I think it's a complicated question and we're not going to ... Getting into the whole freedom of speech issue I think is beyond the scope of our talk, but I think that we have to, one, I think we all embrace the first amendment and we embrace the need to engage our students with difference and ideas and critical thinking. All the things, all the buzzwords that we are using. But at the bottom of this is we do have to create a much clearer sense of inclusion and also how we are actively bringing our students to the table to have various types of discussion as an educational experience.

It's complicated. At Wellesley, we've initiated this past semester, a very significant initiative. It's a taskforce on speech and inclusion, which is going to ... it's made up four students, four faculty and four staff to come back with recommendations on how we create much of greater sense of inclusion while also fostering this dynamic way of interacting and sharing ideas and engaging in difference. And faculty are as much a part of that as students, as much a part of that as staff. These are big issues for our campuses and every constituent has got to be engaged.

Dan Porterfield: I would just add one little thing which is a little point, but it's worth mentioning because just called orientation. I honestly think in a way orientation may be one of the more overrated concepts because everything is so important any time. I think orientation should go on for all four years. We've all crossed the stage, "Congratulations, you're oriented to being a college graduate." But I still could use a little orientation because the issues will change.

Paula Johnson: Dan, we are actually, this year in august, we are actually taking a lot out of orientation because there's only but so much a student who's getting used to a new place, new people, can absorb.

Dan Porterfield: That's smart.

Paula Johnson: It's too much. It needs to be really spread throughout. It's much more of a continuous process. It's the way we learn. Why would it be different than anything else we learn?

Dan Porterfield: Exactly. Thank you.

Interviewer:

Thank you so much. This was an amazing conversation. Thank you everybody tonight, and let's have another round of applause for our amazing and distinct panelists.