



# Branch Alliance

for Educator Diversity

## *A Higher Standard*

### **The Educational Ecosystem from All Directions A Conversation with Dr. Edwardo Padron** Transcript

**0:00:05.3 Kim Igwe:** And now I would love to introduce our guest, our featured guest, Dr. Edwardo Padron is President Emeritus of Miami Dade College. He earned his PhD in economics from the University of Florida. In 2018, he was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2016, President Barack Obama awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the US for being a prominent national voice for access and inclusion in higher education. The Florida Council of 100 awarded him the 2020 Grand Floridian Prize.

**0:00:44.7 Kim Igwe:** In 2009, Time Magazine included him on the list of the 10 Best College presidents. In 2010, Florida Trend Magazine placed him on the cover of its inaugural Floridian of the Year issue. In 2011, the Washington Post named him one of the eight most influential college presidents in the US. Also, in 2011, he was awarded the prestigious Carnegie Corporation Centennial Academic Leadership Award. In 2018, he received the Citizen Service Award from Voices for National Service, the coveted TIAA ACE, Hesburgh Award for Leadership Excellence and the Aspen Institute Ascend Fellowship. In 2015, he was inducted into the US News and World Report STEM Hall of Fame and was awarded the Harry Truman Award from the American Association of Community Colleges.

**0:01:36.4 Kim Igwe:** Dr. Padron energetic leadership extends to many of the nation's leading organizations. He is the past chair of the Board of Directors of the American Council on Education and is the past chair of the Board of the Association of American Colleges and



Universities and former Chair of the Business Higher Education Forum. During his career, he had been selected to serve on posts of national prominence by six American presidents. I'm now gonna hand it over to Dr. Patty Alvarez McHatton, BranchED chief by Program Officer, who will be facilitating our conversation here today. Thank you both for being here.

**0:02:18.7 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** Thank you so much, Kim. I appreciate the introduction. Dr. Padron. I am honored and humbled to be able to have an opportunity to have a conversation with you and learn more about your experiences and your passion with regard to education. And so, as Kim already shared, the webinar series is really focused around this idea of the importance of an educational ecosystem to ensure the success of all of our learners. President Obama recognized you with a presidential medal of freedom, and in his speech, he highlighted your educational journey. Can you share a little bit more about your journey and how the educational ecosystem supported you throughout that process?

**0:03:05.8 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Thank you, Patty. And first, let me say how privileged I feel to have the opportunity to spend this afternoon with you and your colleagues, and my admiration for the work at BranchED and your leadership has accomplished at this wonderful organization. I'm very proud to be part of this. My journey. It's been a long journey already. And in fact it's not different than that of hundreds of thousands, millions of immigrants who have come into this country looking for freedom and opportunity. I was 15 and my brother 16 when my father and my mother, decided to find a way to send us to the United States.

**0:04:01.5 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** The communist regime had taken over the government and all the civil liberties, all the rights that we're so familiar with in the United States, like freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, everything imaginable went out the window. And the fear for incarceration, just for criticizing the government people were shot and killed just for disagreeing with the government. It was a horrible time. And my parents were desperate to get us out of there to avoid us being indoctrinated into the Marxist way of living. And we were fortunate to be able to, after one year and a half of effort to be able to land in Miami. And that's where my journey really in the United States started. It was a rough time. It was difficult and it was difficult because I didn't know the language. I didn't have any money.

**0:05:08.3 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** I didn't have any family in the United States, and I only had the clothes that I had on when I arrived here. And on top of that, I had to take care of my 3 year younger brother who came along with me. I will say, first of all, because immigration today is a hot topic that the most difficult decision that any parent can make in his or her life is that of separating from their children with no knowledge whether they will ever see them again. And that was the case in my case. My father and my mother are my heroes for having made that very difficult decision in order to save us and in order to give us an opportunity. My mother made me promise when we separated that in the United States I would go to college, because my mother said to me, that's the only way that you would have a real opportunity to get an education and have a better future.

**0:06:19.2 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** And that has followed me ever since has made a difference in my life, because that's what really prompted me to do all the sacrifices necessary, especially at the beginning. To be able to achieve what I have been able to achieve in my life. And those days I will not go into details, but they were difficult because so very often we didn't have a place to sleep. I used to sleep three, four hours a day working and going to school, and again, taking care of my brother and doing all kind of work in order to be able to maintain that promise to my mother. But life went on and we found a way of surviving. And I decided, to go to school and major in economics. And the only reason why I decided to major in economics was because my idea at that age, very young of the American dream was that is idea is becoming very wealthy. I studied economics and not education or anything like that.

**0:07:35.8 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** And as life will have it, I ended up teaching, instead of working for a large corporation, I had some job, very promising job offers that I did not accept because I decided to teach. And that commitment was for one year. And I lasted there 50 years at an institution. That was the only one that would open the doors for me because my greatest frustration was when I was completing high school, was using all my savings to apply to some of the best universities in this nations. And they all rejected me. And the only place that opened the doors was a school that was a junior college that had just opened a year and a half before, and that changed my life. There's an irony on this story because nine of the 10 universities that I applied to have come back in later years to give me, I'm gonna write a doctorate, which inspired me to always say, and I say this in all of my writings, is that talent is universal, but opportunity is not.

**0:08:52.8 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** And that is the other crisis that we have in America today. And there is not enough opportunity for people and a lot of people with talent to be able to harness that talent. And those institutions such as yours and many of the schools that are represented on this discussion here today, understand that and understand how important our jobs are and our mission is. And I call it mission because we don't have jobs, we have mission, we're missionaries and in fact we are people who are trying to provide the opportunity for our people to really grow and fulfill the American promise. So that's the journey. I know I extended myself a little bit, but you wanted to know about that. And I have to say in closing that, that my whole history, my whole success, if you want to call it that, has been a history of collaboration, has been a history of working together and bringing people together and creating yes, an ecosystem that would really make it possible for us to harness the best in young people today.

**0:10:14.5 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** Thank you. Thank you so much, Dr Padron. So, Miami Dade College, is a national model of integrating an educational ecosystem into the fabric of the institution and you have been recognized for making the college more affordable and accessible to students. So how did you approach that work at Miami Dade College? How did it evolve over time?

**0:10:41.9 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** As I said when I joined Miami Dade College, I did it because I found they are my sense of purpose. I found there a way of realizing my dreams having been a student, especially in high school where I felt invisible. I knew that better and other students should have better opportunities. So I dedicated my entire academic life to really transforming, bringing transformational change to the way the organization and the institution works in order to really set an example and the model that the community and all of the people that have something to do with education could take pride on. Let me first say from the beginning that that's not an easy job. It takes time. It takes years, I should say that I had the fortune of being there a long time.

**0:11:44.5 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Longevity matters, because it allowed me to really have an agenda, a strategic plan, and be able to get people other comforts, to join in that effort because no one single person can get that work done. It has to have believers and understanding also that the faculty is the essence of that institution. And the faculty has the most important role, the most dramatic role in all of this. And when the faculty's committed and the faculty's properly supported, it's incredible things that you can accomplish. And one of the things that we need to understand is a society changes and we have all seen the changes that have taken place in society in the last 30, 40, 50 years. Some of you're too young to know that. But I do, in fact, the change has been so dramatic that you need to have a constant evolution and a constant adapting to the changes in order to really make education worthwhile and to make it really motivational and realistic for the students that we have today.

**0:13:05.3 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** I believe that our institutions have an obligation to be incubators of inclusion, people who give everyone a chance. Everyone who wants an opportunity to learn. And no question that we are the most important equalizers in society because education, no matter how you look at it, is the one key that allows to have the tools to be able to accomplish what I think institutions should be all about, which is to be engines of economic development, engines of economic mobility, and so forth and so on. So, it is a work. We don't have the time today to go over all of the details. I'm trying to give you in a nutshell, at the fact that it took an army of people to really be able to develop an institution that I'm very proud of and has gained national reputation for being such an incredible model where inclusion and diversity and excellence can go hand in hand.

**0:14:16.8 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Because unfortunately, when you're serving students who are mostly low income, when you're serving students who are first generation, who come from minority groups, a lot of people believe that you cannot get real sound, excellent education out of that school. And what we are proving at Miami Dade College is very simple. And that is that all those things can go together and still accomplish and be able to be an institution that is a school of choice. And it's a school that really has produced an incredible impact on the city of Miami. Most people in Miami will acknowledge Miami Dade College as the most important catalyst and the major force in the new Miami of today. And

that's as a result of having given people an opportunity to get educated.

**0:15:09.8 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** When you look at the leadership of the city from the people that represent us in Congress, in our senate, in the United States, our judges, our doctors, our engineers, our architects, our teachers, most of them in this city, which is a very young city, have all come out of Miami Dade College. And the ones being they will tell you like I have and like I do every day of my life, is it had not been because of that school that was willing to take a chance on us, mostly immigrants. We would not have had the opportunity to do the things that we have done. And definitely for me, I would not be talking to you here today if it had not been because of that institution. So in summary, what that says is that it takes, as the proverb says, it takes a village to be able to build things such as this. And I feel that great educators understand that and work hard to accomplish that.

**0:16:16.0 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** I so appreciate your comments from right now. I think one of the things that emerged for me is, that it takes time, right? It just seems like we sometimes are so focused on a quick fix, something that's a flash in the pan kind of thing. And so we don't end up with real true change and really effective educational systems or situations because we're just not willing to put in the time. So I really appreciate that. I think the other piece is, hope. That's what I hear, right? That there is this belief that this place that you imagine this wonderful place where students feel welcomed and valued and affirmed, and held to a high excellent standard. It's possible. We can do it right. Sometimes we're our own worst enemy when it comes to thinking about what we want to do.

**0:17:14.5 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** And the students have to believe it. That is the most important thing. The students have to believe that yes, they can do it. The students have to believe that there's a future for them. And it's so important that from the very beginning, the students get a sense of belonging, which I didn't have in high school. In high school, I considered myself to be invisible. And I was there for a year and a half. And when I ended, I graduated from high school, I went to Miami Dade College, for the first time I saw the opportunity. The opportunity because opportunity changes everything. And the fact of the matter is that yes, it not only takes time, but it also takes believers. Not only with the faculty and the administration, but especially the students. Their self-esteem is so important. Their ability to know that their people who are there to support them, people who care about them, that is so special. That is so special. And that's what so many teachers do so well and make all the difference in this great nation of ours.

**0:18:31.0 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** Absolutely. So, you have stated that every student has potential and that it's the responsibility of the institution to harness the talent and provide opportunities to students. Can you share a little bit about how institutions can identify, harness and provide those opportunities to students and to further the students talents?

**0:18:55.1 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Well, you have to know your students. If you don't know your students, you don't know what is it that is impacting them. I am sure everyone who's

listening to this discussion here today are very familiar with this situation. All the things that happen in the life of so many of our students, especially when they come from low income backgrounds, especially when they come from their immigrants, or where they come from groups that have been marginalized for a long time. These students have a lot of deficits. And I hate to use that word because I think it connotes something negative. But the fact of the matter is that these are deficits that have been sort of institutionalized in many, many ways. And you have to make sure that if you know your students, you find the resources to be able to support them in a way that you change their lives. And the key and what those people do not understand is you don't have to do it alone.

**0:20:03.9 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** We are living in a society today where we are all in silos. And every organization, every school they feel that this is what they do. But we don't have to be in silos. We can all work together and we have something to provide, something to support. Again, one of the secrets of Miami Dade College, is our ability to have worked and continue to work with all kinds of organizations and especially with higher Ed. One of the big, big problems we have in this nation is the opportunity of the students to go from high school to college. And all the issues that surface in that and how difficult it is sometimes for students, especially students who are the most underprivileged, to be able to make that transition. And working with the high school and getting faculty to faculty speaking.

**0:21:04.1 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** So the math faculty at this college and the math faculty at this high school or this elementary school can talk together about math and what it takes for those students to be well prepared when they reach the next level and the next level. Instead of the blaming game that goes on where the college blames the high school and the high school blames the union high and the union high blames and then we blame the parents. And it's a constant blaming, instead of people working together to find solution to these issues. And this is not the only way there are so many social agencies that provide services, children and families, legal services, et cetera.

**0:21:49.7 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** That can very well provide support to the schools and to the parents and to the students who are having a specific situations and be able to alleviate the pain that some of them go through and who really become disenchanted because of this and are not able to fulfill their promise because they feel that it's an impossible job. Again, this is the important thing having that understanding that working together it's possible, and the leadership of the faculty, the leadership of the school can make that happen.

**0:22:31.4 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** So I would imagine throughout your time, you've met resistance, you've met naysayers, you've met individuals who have a particular perspective with regard to certain students, those types of things. How did you coalesce individuals to feel committed to this work, and to collaborate and really move forward in your vision?

**0:23:01.9 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** I have to be very honest with you. We have used marketing

to do that, because we saw many examples of students that work under the worst of circumstances, even students who were involved with the criminal system, et cetera et cetera, that came to that institution. And today, they are leaders of our community, who are lawyers, who are doctors, who are nurses, who are architects. And by using their example, and the story behind them, and how an institution was able to change them, so today, not only they are productive citizens, but they are helping their own communities. It is important, and we have a campaign that is called I'm MDC, meaning I'm Miami Dade College, that is basically one that shows in the paper every day with hundreds and thousands of examples of people who came through that.

**0:24:08.4 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Most of our students come from those backgrounds, it's not like this is a school that is serving privileged people. 90% of students at Miami Dade College, which is graduates more students than any other college in America. Most of them come from those kind of backgrounds, and they are students who have been transformed by the way that they are treated, by the way that they are dealt with, by their understanding of what they're there for. And this is so precious, and this is so beautiful, and that's why this institution has been awarded so many prizes, that's why so many American presidents have come to see with their own eyes how this experiment has worked, and how we can take it to other places. And it's beautiful to see this transformation, and I know it's taking place in other places because I have visited other places and I see this happening. It takes effort, it takes determination, and it takes the understanding that we educators have the key to the future of the country, and we can change that.

**0:25:30.2 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** Wonderful. Yeah, I think the other piece too, in your discussion of how you help bring people on board is this idea of stories. We often are enamored of numbers and what they say, but it's the stories that move us to action. And so I appreciate that conversation as well. So you have spent decades working to make Florida a more inclusive place. I mean, it's clear in everything that you have said to us today. Recently Florida has passed major educational policies that restrict public school instruction on race, gender, identity, and sexual orientation. What advice do you have for educators, and it really it isn't just Florida. Many states are passing similar legislation. But what advice would you have for educators who are facing these environments at this time?

**0:26:29.0 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Well, I cannot hide my disappointment on what I have seen in the last couple of years happen. You're right, not only in Florida, but in many other states and it's funny because you look at the legislation that is passed and it's identical. Only the number of the legislation changes because they're all being drafted by the same organization somewhere up there up north. And it's sad to see that happen. Because it's really impacting our future. And having come from where I came from and where I saw the textbooks being changed. So the history that they were trying for me to learn different from the history that I had learned in the six, seven years prior when I saw so many of the things that I see being tried in America today. It's hard for me to swallow that.

**0:27:30.0 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** But the answer to your question is very simple to me. We have to use the tools of democracy. We cannot just complain. We just cannot feel sorry about ourselves and the children, the democracy give us tools that are so basic and so important, that we need to use them more. We need to raise our voices. Our voices are powerful. One of the problems we face in America today is that we have lost faith in our collective ability to bring about change. When we look at the number of people that failed to vote in elections that are so consequential in America today, it's an embarrassment for the world, it's a real embarrassment. And the least we can do is exercise that sacred thing, which is being able to vote. Well, you vote Democrat, Republican, in the whatever you wanna do. It's fine, but go and be part of that decision making. So you assume responsibility.

**0:28:41.0 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Organize, participate, bring people together, have a civil discussions about these issues. And I know this is not easy nowadays with the divisiveness and all the controversies, but I think we have that duty. If we don't do it, who else is gonna do it? We cannot depend. And let's not forget that some of the most horrible stories in the world, not too long ago, in the '30s and the '40s, especially in Europe and other places, and it still happen today in Latin America and even in Africa and in Asia, is precisely, precisely because people did not take the steps that they needed to take to make sure they protect the rights that they have. And what I'm saying is, use the tools of democracy. They are many and they're powerful, and each person counts.

**0:29:44.0 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** Okay. And she talked about how it was difficult to hate someone that you knew. And so the work that she engaged in with this group of individuals that you would think, would be something that she would not, would definitely have a particular sense about. But she got to know these individuals in a way. And that always stuck with me. It's difficult to hate someone once you get to know them. And so I think that speaks to what you're saying. I think it's very very important. Talk a little bit, because we, I know in my institution in Higher ED, we had a lot of transfer students that came from our community college. So talk a little bit about the role of community colleges in helping students, especially traditionally, students from low economic backgrounds or marginalized students, whatever. I myself was a product of community college. But talk a little bit about how powerful those institutions are in preparing our students.

**0:30:52.5 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** I think community colleges are doing an incredible job in spite of the fact that they are the most underfunded institutions in America. Most K through 12 institutions get more money per student than community colleges do. And definitely four, five, six times less than the universities get to provide the same education. Simply, that's what it is. It's putting the students at the center of decision making, asking the question, why are we doing this? Why are we doing, how is this going to benefit the students? And really giving the students again, that sense of hope, that sense of belonging, that they need. And it's tough because as I tell my friends from the Ivys, I said, you have such an easy job because you select the students you want, you get the cream of the cream, and those



students are gonna succeed in spite of the institution.

**0:31:57.1 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** But community colleges turn to get the students who, number one, most of them cannot go sometime because they have to work in order to support their families. Secondly, they are working on the very difficult situations. I know so many cases of students who would have a flat tire, would not have enough money to replace the tire, would have to drop out, that would have to go to an emergency room and would have to drop out. And then having the persistence to come back and complete the program. I think little by little, I'm the eternal optimist. State institutions and private institutions are understanding the power of community colleges because those students who transfer to those universities, they have grit. They are resilient and they're going to succeed. And those students make some of the best students.

**0:32:55.0 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** I get reports from some of the best universities in this country on the performance of our students from Princeton, from Georgia Tech, from Georgetown, you name it. And I am so proud to see that our students are not only achieving at the same, but sometimes at the higher level that the native university students who were handpicked on the basis of SATs and ACTs and all of these other things, and many of them are becoming leaders of student government and this and this and that. I think community colleges have a lot to offer. We just need to open our minds and become more understanding of the role that our institutions. America is blessed with a very diverse system of higher education, but we don't use it well because we separate institutions that we hardly talk to each other. And that's where the challenge is.

**0:34:00.8 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** So we are at a time where higher ed and the value of higher ed is being questioned. So what are your thoughts around higher ed? Yeah, what are your thoughts around that thought that perhaps we don't need it?

**0:34:19.3 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Well, my thought is very simple. We need it today more than ever. More than ever. And it's funny because this started a few years back, this is nothing new. This started about 18 years ago. And the people, especially the pundits and the politicians who were saying not everybody needs to go to college. They were not talking about their children and grandchildren. They were talking about these "other people", they insisted their children and grandchildren go to the best colleges they could ever afford. But they were not talking about their kids. They were talking about other kids. But those other kids, as I said, have potential. Those other kids have the opportunity to be great contributors to this country. And we have proven that time after time, after time, and all they need is the opportunity.

**0:35:16.4 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** We need to make education more affordable. We need to make sure that we're more understanding that today. The other thing that is happening is that they want to, I don't know if this word, I don't even know how to pronounce this, vocationalizing education. Okay. And that's a big mistake because if anything it's always

great to have the best skills in the world. We at Miami Dade have instituted all kind of pro bachelor's and AA degrees in cybersecurity, data analytics, biotechnology, you name it. But that alone doesn't do it because things are changing so fast that what's true today in five years, maybe totally obsolete. And there are some skills you learn in college, like critical thinking, analytical skills and things that are key for you to be able to make intelligent decisions and to be able to be the best and most productive employees in any industry.

**0:36:22.2 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** So those who are the naysayers say, we don't need college or higher education has no role they're wrong. We need it now more than ever, and we better hurry and change that so more people have the opportunity because you look around what's happening in India, even in countries that they're not considered super developed and China so far the number of engineers, the number of people that they're graduating are so many multiples of the ones that we are creating, that they're gonna take all over the world before we know it. And we need to be able to compete and continue to be the best country in the world.

**0:37:08.0 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** So I'm gonna go off on a different direction. So, there's a lot of discussion now around artificial intelligence and the implication of artificial intelligence and artificial intelligence on education and this and that and the other. Do you have any thoughts about that?

**0:37:24.0 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** I believe that you cannot work against progress, [chuckle] we felt the same way about other things in 10 years back, 20 years back, we are very resistant to change. We always say change is good, but not when it matters. It never changes, most difficult job all along my many years in higher ed, has been convincing the faculty, convincing the faculty that we must evolve and we must adapt. Part of the problem is that these new things and concepts are introduced, but the faculty are not provided with enough support and enough development opportunities to catch up. When the pandemic happened there were, well, majority of faculty had never taught a single course online. Okay. And from one day to the other, they were told, you need to start teaching this course online tomorrow.

**0:38:33.1 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** And we expected them to be their best beautiful job. Well, it doesn't happen that way. You need to provide the support you need to, and many institutions did, but many didn't. And with artificial intelligence, I think it's very, very important that we provide the support to the faculty because it really provides some of the tools that will really make their job easier, will be able to facilitate and convey ideas in a way that up to now has been more difficult and the students are gonna be ahead of the faculty if we don't support the faculty, and we don't want that. So yes the answer to both of your question is a big yes.

**0:39:22.7 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** Alright. So we are, and actually we are streaming this conversation. We are at our summit, our spring summit. And so we've got, I think it's around

60 or so participants, perhaps a little bit more than that. And so we have educators, from the PK-12 sector. We have some faculty in higher ed, and we also have some teacher candidates that are with us. So as we near our time together, what advice, what parting words would you give each of those groups as they move forward in the work that they do in preparing teachers and teaching children and working with families?

**0:40:04.6 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** I'm gonna say something that I'm sure all of them, if not most of them already know. That we have engaged with the most rewarding profession that you can ever think of. Because when you think about the opportunity that we all have to change people's lives. I'm not a very religious person. I talk to God every day, but I'm not the person who goes to church every day or every Sunday. What I can tell you, there is nothing more religious, there is nothing more valid, more impacting than the ability of you to be able to change the life of someone for good. And only in our profession, you find that opportunity every second of your life. Whether you're in the classroom, whether you're in the lab, whether you're in an administrative office, whether you're at home in your computer.

**0:41:08.7 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** And I really believe that we have bashed the teaching profession for too long now. I know that many teachers feel disrespected or not appreciated, definitely underpaid in many cases. It's a shame. We should be ashamed of ourselves. We should not be that way. But also think about what I just said. Regardless of all of that, we have the best opportunity of our lives to really change the world and be able to go on the to sleep at night and say, oh, my God, and think of those students that you changed. The best reward that I get is walking out of my house. It doesn't matter where I go, that I find a mother, a grandmother, father, or student who says, thank you. Thank you for what Miami Dade College gave me. See what I'm doing now. It wouldn't have happened without that institution. And you have no idea the amount of pleasure that I get out of that knowing that something happened there that changed their life, of someone who realizes it, appreciates it and in fact changed his or her life.

**0:42:36.0 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** Oh, that's powerful, very powerful. So I want to take a moment and I want to let all of our participants know to please feel free to add some questions. If you have any questions of Dr. Padron, we want to make sure to give you an opportunity to be able to to ask those questions. So we have one. So, Dr Padron...

**0:42:55.7 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** This is the tough part of the program.

[chuckle]

**0:43:00.7 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** So what tips can you share for encouraging faculty ownership to change the culture in higher ed from one that is exclusive to one that is inclusive?

**0:43:14.9 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Well, if the faculty doesn't do it, nobody else is going to do it. I'm convinced of that. It has to come from the faculty. Because, as I said before, I use the word essence, the faculty is the essence of the institution. And if the faculty really believe in their duty to make their talent, their teaching, their work more inclusive, it takes again the conversations, it takes away raising your voices, it takes again leading, leading. The faculty sometimes get the feeling that as teachers, they don't lead, that you have this president and that other thing that we're supposed to lead.

**0:44:02.1 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** No. Faculty need to lead the institutions and we are there to serve them and to support them so they can do the their job that only they can do. And they're the best at. And I think faculty need to believe that. And I say this with all due respect, through my work, and even though I'm retired, I'm working harder than ever, I travel a lot, I go to a lot of institutions, almost on a weekly basis. And I meet a lot of people who give me a lot of hope. Who give me a lot of hope because their belief is sincere, they really, they're concerned, they want to make a difference. And when someone wants to make a difference, they find a way.

**0:44:54.1 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** Well, I want to say that you have given me a lot of hope right now. I was sitting here thinking, I would love to work for this man. You are just so positive, so energetic. You so believe in our students, in our children, that it truly, truly is powerful. So thank you. Thank you so much. Is there anybody else that has a question that you would like to surface. And while folks are thinking about that. Is there anything that maybe we didn't ask that you wish we had or any other thoughts that you'd like to share with us.

**0:45:37.6 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Well, I think we cover a lot of territory. And, again, I'm so grateful for this opportunity, I mean, this very sincerely because I'm very familiar with the work of BranchED. And I know what you do. And I know how powerful that is. And I hope that you could cover more of a larger universe, because there are so many institutions, so many faculty who can benefit from what you're doing. But we need to put more emphasis on pedagogy. That's very, very important, especially in higher ed. Let me tell you my story as I told you, I wasn't planning to be an educator, I just wanted to be wealthy. And that's why I studied economics. And then I found the power of education. And when they gave me a contract that was to be for a year, because I was going to then leave and make money, which I never did.

**0:46:49.3 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** I was given a book and the book that I was going to teach, I have never taught. And I went into a classroom and I looked at the students and I said, "Oh my God, here are my victims. Here are my victims." Because I didn't have any sense of how to teach. And most of us go to college, get our PhDs, our EDs, whatever and are experts in the subjects that we learn and we never learn how to teach and how to communicate and apply knowledge to get solutions to solve the problems of society is as important as anything else. And I think at some point, the schools of education of this nation need to

learn that lesson. Once the schools of education they're probably the least guilty of this. But all the schools need to understand that there are people who are going to go into teaching. They need to be prepared, they need to be helped, they need to be given the tools, and that's gonna be magic.

**0:48:05.2 Dr. Alvarez McHatton:** Wonderful. Excellent. Thank you so much. And I will share a story. I was talking to a faculty member several years ago. He was a new faculty member, chemistry, and he was sharing with me some challenges that he was having with his students as far as being able to get the information. And I said, well, tell me a little bit about how you're teaching your class. And he looked at me and he said, chalk and talk. And I'm like, "Wait, what? Chalk and talk." And he goes, "Yeah, I talk while I write on the board." And I'm like, okay, well let's have some conversation. So when you were talking, it reminded me of that conversation I had with that young faculty member. He was amazing. He really wanted to improve his practice, but I think at this point, I'm supposed to turn it over to Kim. Is that right Kim? Sorry. I'm so enjoying my time. So I will turn it over to Dr. Padron again thank you so much. Truly an honor having this conversation with you. Kim, it's all yours.

**0:49:01.9 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** Thank you...

**0:49:01.9 Kim Igwe:** Thank you both for... Sorry, go ahead.

**0:49:06.6 Dr. Edwardo Padron:** No, I just wanted to say thank you for the opportunity. I thoroughly enjoyed this.

**0:49:13.5 Kim Igwe:** This was amazing. Thank you both Dr. Alvarez McHatton for hosting And the discussion and Dr. Padron for sharing all of your wisdom and experience with our community. I know everyone is inspired to go off to their next meeting and bring that spirit, just inspiring everyone they're around. So thank you so much for those who are joining us, I wanted to share a couple of upcoming events. And so on the screen, if you are not connected with us on social media please find us at Branch Alliance. You can also connect with us on our website and our resource portal. We will be posting this recording there and you will receive an email with a link to that posting if you registered for this event and we have future events coming up, we would love to see you at our next learning event is a virtual workshop on April 2nd with Dr. Alvarez McHatton, and Dr. Lisic which is part of our spring data series.

**0:50:18.6 Kim Igwe:** During this time, you will explore a protocol that provides a process for engaging with data and developing a shared understanding that supports continuous improvement efforts. You can register using the QR code on the screen or visit our events page to register for that event and future events. The link in the chat will take you to our events page as well. And if you enjoyed today's webinar, go to our next Nuts and Bolts webinar, which will include a panel of experts on the topic of social emotional learning and restorative practices. That will take place on the first Wednesday of April, April 3rd 12:00 to

1:00 Central Time, 1:00 to 2:00 Eastern Time. If you're Mountain Time, you'll figure that out for us.

**0:51:05.3 Kim Igwe:** You can register using the QR code on the flyer on the screen or using the link in the chat. Thank you so much for being with us today. We would love your feedback. You should see a poll pop up on your screen and we would just love to have a little bit of feedback as we continue our learning events. Thank you everyone for being here today, and until next time, thanks so much for joining us.

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