

Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 11:00 AM

Subject: Important Date Changes: ATD/USC Racial Equity Leadership Academy



As many of you know, at DREAM2020 we announced a new opportunity for colleges in the Achieving the Dream Network to apply to participate in the inaugural cohort of the Achieving the Dream and USC Race and Equity Center Racial Equity Leadership Academy (RELA). The partnership between Achieving the Dream and the USC Race and Equity Center is significant and important to our continuing efforts to center equity, and especially racial equity, in our student success work. RELA is designed to support teams of five individuals from ten colleges in the ATD Network to develop and implement a strategic racial equity change effort. Response to the call to participate has been overwhelming. And, we are grateful for The Kresge Foundation's support of RELA.

Like you on your campuses (and sometimes in remote environments), Achieving the Dream and the USC Race and Equity Center have been monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and talking with colleagues about how the disruption has been affecting your work, your planning, and your own personal well-being. The crisis touches all of us. We understand that you are spending nearly every waking minute preparing, as best you are able, to face what might be around the next bend. We care deeply about you, your teams, your students, and your communities. We recognize all that you are facing at this time and will continue to face as we move through the end of the academic year and into the summer and fall.

Thus, **the ATD and USC teams have decided to postpone the Racial Equity Leadership Academy by several months** to give colleges time to manage the current situation and prepare for recovery. This will give you more time to prepare your application and to incorporate your emerging new reality into your planning. We also think the work we have planned for you to do together with us is best conducted in person. We are moving the in-person summer session of the program on the USC campus to July 2021.

We will be using this spring and summer to work together to redesign the Academy curriculum with new eyes. Because of the world pandemic, equity work will look different. For example, what does equity kindness look like in this new environment? How do we care for our most vulnerable during this time? What does resiliency really look like? We'll be using the COVID-19 crisis as a living laboratory to redesign the work we'll be doing at the Academy over this next year.

Additional information will be sent to each college that has applied or has expressed interest. **We will release a new application to the network on September 22 with applications due on November 5.** Selected colleges will be notified in early December. We will use DREAM2021 as an opportunity to orient the selected colleges and kick-off the work.

If you have any questions about the application or the Academy, please contact Francesca Carpenter at RELA@achievingthedream.org.



Dr. Karen A. Stout
Achieving the Dream President & CEO



Shaun R. Harper, Ph.D.
USC Race and Equity Center Executive Director

NEW RACIAL EQUITY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY TIMELINE

September 22, 2020	Application released to ATD Network
November 5, 2020	Applications due by 5pm ET
December 9, 2020	Selected colleges announced
February 17, 2021	In-person orientation for selected colleges at DREAM 2021 in Orlando, FL
July 2021	In-person summer intensive convening at the University of Southern California