

Transcription for

**THE KEY WITH INSIDE HIGHER ED**

EP. 34: SERVING WORKING STUDENTS WITH INNOVATION AND AGILITY

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THE KEY WITH INSIDE HIGHER ED

EP. 34: SERVING WORKING STUDENTS WITH INNOVATION AND AGILITY

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PAUL FAIN

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Hello, welcome to The Key with IHE. I'm Paul Fain, a contributing editor at Inside Higher Ed and the host of this podcast. In this episode, I spoke with leaders of two very different institutions, Purdue Global University and Broward College in Florida. But both ones focused on underserved student groups, including students who hold down jobs while pursuing credentials. Gregory Adam Haile, Broward's president, talked about how his institution's work to add short-term credentials that are stackable and feature embedded professional certifications. Often, these certificates are aimed at lower-income students who may not be interested in pursuing a degree right now.

GREGORY ADAM HAILE: We know that there are folks who are feeling the same pain that they felt in 2008 and it never went away. And so I think the question for all of us, and certainly it's been highlighted during this time, is how do we go into those communities provide short-term opportunities for those folks to get on-ramped into postsecondary opportunity, whether it be by a certificate, and this is the

really exciting part, is that a lot of these folks are first generation college students, so we're actually going into these communities and saying, let's start with the certification. Let's start with introducing you to the opportunity that can in and of itself be materially changing to your income and outcomes over your lifetime.

PAUL FAIN: I also spoke with Frank Dooley, chancellor of Purdue Global, an online university the enrolls roughly 36,000 students, 70 percent of whom are eligible to receive federal Pell Grants. Purdue Global's enrollment is up 18 percent compared to last year. And Dooley talked about his university's philosophy on growth, and how to be both nimble and innovative to best meet the needs of students and the job market.

FRANK DOOLEY: There are advantages of scale. And some of these institutions that are there, like us, are really able to grow. And we've been able to move with the increase in demand that we've seen. I think one of the other things that is contributing to this, obviously, is COVID-19. I think if anything, what COVID has done, it has shifted forward everyone's willingness to accept online education, maybe by as much as a decade.

PAUL FAIN: Let's get to the conversation.

So I'm speaking with Gregory Adam Haile, the president of Broward College. Gregory, how are you?

GREGORY ADAM HAILE: I'm doing incredibly well, Paul. Thank you for having me.

PAUL FAIN: So you all made an announcement recently about some credentials, rapid credentials, and it caught my interest. And I wondered if you could tell our audience what you're working on.

GREGORY ADAM HAILE: Thank you very much. So yes, we have been working on rapid credentialing for our community. And I saw that broadly, because it's for our current students, but really trying to make sure that we provide opportunities for community members who otherwise don't see any role for postsecondary education in their lives. Obviously, we are in the middle of one of the greatest economic challenges that we will experience in our lifetimes. And that means a lot of people have lost their jobs, a lot of people are facing a really difficult time. And they need opportunities immediately. And the idea, as majestic as it typically sounds, of getting a two-year or four-year degree simply is not something that at

this time they can be pursuing.

So we have to ask ourselves, how do we make sure that we give people the tools as soon as we possibly can to ensure that they can get a career or get a job that can help make them sustainable? So we're looking at currently an 8.2 percent unemployment rate in Broward County, which is 3 X what it was before the pandemic. Obviously, the number is coming down, but still the challenge remains. And so what we've been looking at is how to we make sure that get under one year's time a certificate that is marketable for individuals who have lost employment or are seeking better employment.

And we've been able to do that frankly not just over the last year from the support from the state, but we've been doing this work for the last couple of years even pre-pandemic. One of the things that we're all aware of by now and is certainly in sharp relief in light of the pandemic is that there are certain communities that are, the pain is compounded. We know that even before the pandemic, there were certain communities at a time in our county we had a 2.5 percent unemployment rate, had 10, 12, and 15 percent unemployment. We know that there are folks who are feeling the same pain that they felt in 2008 and it never went away.

And so I think the question for all of us, and certainly it's been highlighted during this time, is how to do go into those communities and provide short-term opportunities for those folks to get on-ramped into postsecondary opportunity, whether it be by a certificate, and this is the really exciting part, is that a lot of these folks are first-generation college students. So we're actually going into these communities and saying, let's start with the certification. Let's start with introducing you to the opportunity that can in and of itself be materially changing to your income and your outcomes over your lifetime. And if we can start there, which is what we're seeing now, escalated by way of the rapid credentialing resources that are coming from the state, then we can introduce a completely new opportunity to folks who otherwise may have never pursued any other opportunity for postsecondary attainment.

PAUL FAIN: So just to be clear, the state is helping to subsidize professional certifications in some programs?

GREGORY ADAM HAILE: Yeah, that's exactly right. You're seeing this in our health sciences programs and supply chain management, and you're seeing this is Amazon web services, and other programs that we've been able to offer. And in the last couple of years, we now served over 2000 students. Now, since the pandemic, we've served over 500 students in this regard. And the state has provided Broward College with \$1.9 million to be able to provide these resources. And students have been chomping at

the bit at this opportunity, as you can imagine, because in large part they're not paying anything. There is no tuition tied to this. There are no fees tied to this for the students. These are essentially free opportunities for them to change their lives and adjust for the challenges that they're currently seeing by way of a postsecondary credential.

PAUL FAIN: And have you all created new short-term certificates to kind of go with this program in the last couple of years, and if so, I'm assuming that's the case, how much a hard lift is that? I know it's not easy to make sure that these are stackable and eventually can add up to a degree.

GREGORY ADAM HAILE: Well, we've had the benefit, frankly, of years before this pandemic, working on stackable credentialing. And this is essentially the ideal of working with a student, who, as we all know, sometimes will face challenges that are disruptive in their lives. And so they may be on the way to pursuing a degree, but one of the worst things that can happen is a life disruption occurs and they have to stop out with no credential, no obvious tool to share with an employer to say I've obtained with. And so years ago, what we've been able to do was build in embedded programming, embedded certifications so that if for some unfortunate reason a student had to stop out, that student could still walk away and say, but I have this certification, and share it with an employer that they have, or a future employer to either get escalated in their career or ensure the retention of their career.

What we've now been able to do is really extend that. So imaging for a moment, this is not a student who's pursuing a degree, this is student who's not even thinking about pursuing a degree, but now this rapid credential can be an on-ramp to pursuing a degree. So in other words, they may get a certification in project management or information technology, or data analytics, or Microsoft certification, or manufacturing, all these opportunities. And they may not be thinking about pursuing a degree, but they're getting this certification that ladders into a degree. And so all of sudden now you've said, you've completed this program over six months or less perhaps. And you can tell them, if you complete another program, you're actually half way to your associate's degree. And if you complete another program, then your three-quarters of the way to your next level of degree. So it changes the consideration, it changes the tone about how those opportunities are being pursued. And we always have to be thinking about this in context of those who may never be pursuing these opportunities, who is you told them today, give them two years, or give them four years, and they'll give you a better life, well, that's simply not realistic and its certainly not attainable. So this is a different way to make sure that we can offer them an opportunity that can gradually both enhance their professional opportunities and move them toward further degree attainment.

PAUL FAIN: That makes sense. You talked a little bit about the disparity around Broward in terms of

employment, the impact of the pandemic. I'm thinking potentially a pretty large market for this program. You know, what does success look like to you? I mean, how much scale do you think is feasible to hope for?

GREGORY ADAM HAILE: Yeah, well, I'll tell you what. We've been doing this the last two years as I've mentioned. And we're now into serving well over 2000 students. And to be completely frank, there are a lot of folks who pre-pandemic thought, you know, maybe these communities are maybe not ready for these opportunities or maybe they won't embrace them. And we've been just thrilled to see how these opportunities have been embraced, in large part because we have been going into the heart of the communities, lower-income communities, mostly Black and brown communities, and most of these students who otherwise were not in any way thinking about postsecondary attainment.

And not because they didn't have the capacity. We know this. Not because they didn't have the will, but sometimes it's about the power of proximity. If there's no one in your family talking about postsecondary attainment, if there's no college in your backyard, if your friends aren't talking about it, it's simply not something that become relevant to you. Particularly if we know you don't have the technology infrastructure, or you don't have the transportation or the time, or the affordability, certainly. So what we've recognized now is that we've removed the affordability component, right, because we've been able to go to these communities and say, here's a credential that we will get to you. It will be free. We will make sure that there are great outcomes.

We've had tremendous outcomes. You know, a story I tell often is about an individual who was, who didn't have a college degree, was about to be laid off from her employer due to the employer being acquired by another company. She goes to Broward College for six weeks, six weeks, to get a certification, supply chain management, goes back to her employer. He not only creates a new position for her after previously considering removing her, but he pays her more money, now making \$50,000, and she's not done, to the tune that I mentioned earlier. She's going to continue with us and continue to pursue more credentials, and inevitably, an associated degree.

If we could change that message... And I think part of what's happening now too is, we know this, people are paying greater attention to the disproportionate impact, whether it relates to health, whether it relates to the economy, and certainly as it relates to educational opportunity, which is fulcrum for managing all of those outcomes, right? We know people live longer, we know they make more money, all these positive things from postsecondary attainment. So as we think about long term, taking this moment to understand, what does the expansion of this look like?

I give Florida tremendous credit for deciding to take this and leverage resources to address the needs of these communities. Now, fortunately, again, we've been doing this of the last two years at Broward College, and to be more specific, it's by the way of our expanded business model. Two years when I came into this role, we started expanding our model because we knew we are not in communities that we needed to be. And we have 63,000 students are Broward College, and only 3000 of those students came from the most challenged communities. And we defined those by what the lowest attainment rates and the highest unemployment rates. And here we are charging about \$100 a credit. We are open access. Yet, and still those who need us the most we're getting to us. So we went into the heart of those communities by partnering with nonprofits and municipal organizations, and we now actually provide those postsecondary attainment options in the form of rapid credentials primarily, that ladder into degrees in those communities.

We don't ask them to come to us. We say we're going to go to you and we are going to stay with you in those communities. And that's how we've been able to see such growth in such a short period of time. And so this being a moment where people are recognizing the disparities that you describe, Paul, it's an opportunity to also say, how do we make sure that be capitalize on this new understanding, make sure that these communities are getting the workforce opportunities, perhaps now when they've been in more pain than they've ever been, and leveraging resources to, of course, continue to grow as a nation when it comes to importance of attainment and workforce capabilities to meet the opportunities that are provided by our employers in our community and around our nation.

PAUL FAIN: You know, a lot of really good points there. One that struck me, it resonates with the national data that we're seeing of interest in short-term credentials, particularly among vulnerable communities, adult students, lower-income folks, but this uncertainly, which is totally understandable of not just short-term credentials, but any college credential, does it connect to the employment market, and that doubt really getting into folks minds about whether or not to enroll, or to stick with higher education. How important is it, you know, really interesting pieces about reaching out to communities and explaining these opportunities to them to make sure that they know that these are workforce relevant?

GREGORY ADAM HAILE: Well, one of the most important things, and you're touching on this, is to never forget our audience, right? You know, in many cases, just like I was when I was a child, these are individuals in the community who were told that college is not for them. They were told that college is for the wealthy. We have to start with that understanding and be very clear about removing those barriers, affordability being primary among them.

One, when you got to a community, you tell the community invariably this is for you. That's why we are in your community, right? When you ask them to come to you, you're saying something different. But when you go to them, you're telling them something very, very compatible to any individual's interest that you are here for me.

Two, the affordability component, which we've removed, is a massive barrier, right, a massive barrier. There are other ancillary barriers too. There's a technology and time, that I often talk about. But you get to those, you get to the pure understanding that this is for you, this is of you, and we will remove barriers, particularly affordability primary among them, you change the conversation tremendously.

And so when you get past those things, now you're providing the clear, tangible on-ramp. Here's what the credential looks like and here's the job that it will lead to. So what we've been able to do with our expanded business model via Broward UP, U-P, Unlimited Potential, what we've been doing is partnering with companies, partnering with organizations, and engaging the MOUs, and those organizations are coming along with us, and they're saying, we want to help to tool up these individuals in these communities, and by the way, here's the job on the backend.

So that when the individual says, wait, you're giving me an opportunity in my community, you're giving to me at no cost to me, you are educating me, which I know is a powerful asset that I can leverage for the rest of my life, and you're telling me about the job that is on the backend that will allow me to feed my family and serve my community, and to give me an opportunity to live with a different level of pride, those are the packages that we want to bring to a community. Now, here's the interesting part of me is that we live with these packages every day, many of us, we just don't think about the differential, right? If you're coming from a background where, you know, you grew up like my daughters, knowing exactly what college was, and it was always there for you, it looks different, but, really, it's the same outcome that we're trying to provide to make it inevitable and possible for them not to realize the opportunity for postsecondary attainment.

PAUL FAIN: Absolutely. You've mentioned the role that Florida has played in helping to seed this work. You know, from my perspective in DC, it does feel like Florida is ahead of the curve. You also mentioned the role of nonprofits in getting the word out about this. I mean, what would you like to see, what incentives could help institutions like Broward or others around the country do this work at scale?



GREGORY ADAM HAILE: Yeah, so I do want to expand a little bit on what you shared. The nonprofits that I've worked within in our community have been inextricable to our capacity to expand on this work, and I mean that with all sincerity. If you were to see a map of Broward College and its location, those that need us most, those with the lowest attainment rates and high unemployment rates, you would see essentially no overlap. Yet we're telling those with transportation deficiencies, technology deficiencies, to come to us. So what we've been able to do by way of our partnerships with municipalities and with the nonprofits, we've actually gone into the heart of those communities because those partners have provided the space to us to do it. So we're in those partnerships because we are providing postsecondary education in those sites in the heart of those communities. In two years, we've added more than 15 locations of postsecondary engagement in the heart of the six zip codes that need us most. And now there's been so much information that speaks to a zip code being among the greatest determining factors in your income outcome over your lifetime, we have to address that, we have to face that, we have to do that by way of these partners that we have.

Now, if we think about the incentive going forward, from a state perspective or national perspective, I am focused on pushing as much as I can. I hope our states realize this and our country realizes this. When we think about economic mobility, we have to ask ourselves, what does accountability look like for purposes of economic mobility? We know that the communities that you and I are talking about today have persisted in economic challenge and perhaps decline for decades. We also know, and nearly every economist in the world will tell us, that postsecondary attainment is the most important fulcrum to economic achievement in your lifetime.

And so I would ask that we think about incentives that hold our communities accountable, and perhaps our colleges accountable, for social mobility, for economic mobility. How good are we at taking these communities from 10 percent attainment levels, 20 percent attainment levels to 50 and 60, and perhaps 65 percent attainment levels where we know now that 65 percent of all jobs require some form of postsecondary attainment. And yet we also know and consistently there are communities with 10 and 20 percent attainment levels. Those are the kinds of things that we know exist. We know we have the tools, the potency. This moment is helping us realize the tools and the potency of such tools. Now what is the accountability and where is the incentive comes. We know that a lot of institutions, a lot of institutions are held accountable by performance-based funding models. Very few of those models consistently and aggressively hold us accountable for how well we move people out of poverty, right? If we start to get there, I think we'll start to be able to see even greater progress than we're currently seeing.

PAUL FAIN: Well, President Haile, I really appreciate you taking time to talk through this important work at Broward. And also being the first former litigator, I believe, on the show.

GREGORY ADAM HAILE: [LAUGH] I hope that's a good thing. But it's been my pleasure.

PAUL FAIN: It was in this case. Thanks for your time. I really appreciate it.

GREGORY ADAM HAILE: Well, thank you, Paul. You take care.

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So I'm speaking with Frank Dooley. Frank, how are you?

FRANK DOOLEY: Paul, I am going really well and it's great to talk to you again.

PAUL FAIN: Good to speak with you. Thanks for doing this. So I've said this often. When the Purdue Global news came over the transom, it took me several reads of that press release to understand what I was reading. And I still didn't really get it. But that was in 2017, so time has passed. You're the chancellor now. Can you give us the brief version of the back-story and how Global is structured?

FRANK DOOLEY: Absolutely. And it is really is hard to be believe that was 2017, because it has gone really, really quickly. So in short, the deal was is that Purdue purchased Kaplan University at the time. And the deal was announced about May 1 of 2017. And the purchase price was a dollar, and then there was a long-term contract entered with Kaplan Higher Ed, who now is Kaplan North America, where they provided the back-office support. So they have the IT and they run admissions for us and things like that. It took about a year to get all of the approvals from HLC and ECAR, and all those things put in place. And Purdue Global went live in April of 2018.

So we've been running as a university now for about two and a half years is what we're coming up on. And then in the first year, it threw a lot of money because it, to advertise the change of the name and get that in the market. And some of the critics came out at the end of year-one because of reports of an operating income loss of about I think, oh, \$5 million, and people said this is a horrible thing, etc. This last June when our CFO reported the results, we're now in the black. We have an operating income of \$10 million this last year.

And then if I look at numbers, in the first year the enrollment grew around 2 percent. In the last 12 months we grew 14 percent, and I would say since May 1 when I took over, I was telling Mr. Daniels this all the time, we've been growing at about a 20 percent clip since May 1. So we're up significantly.

So year of year... And one of the things that's a little bit different with the adults, at West Lafayette, we take census sometime in September, and that becomes your iPad's number, and you stamp that in, but these online institutions serving adult learners, we're constantly enrolling. We really are year-round institutions. And there is, just like with younger students, there is a cycle when you do see more people starting in the fall. And I think it's because their kids go back to school, so maybe they can go back to school. But over the course of the year, our enrollments go up and down. And today we're sitting with about 35,000, almost 36,000 students. So we're feeling pretty good right now. And compared to last year, it's up about 18 percent. So those things are all going really well at this point.

PAUL FAIN: So what do you attribute the growth to? I can think of few reasons.

FRANK DOOLEY: Well, you know, I think one of the things is that the name Purdue Global does now, people are associating with... I mean, we've been doing some research and are people able to understand what Purdue Global is or who Purdue Global is. So I think that has caught on. I mean, one of the things that surprised me, I was looking for where are our students. Is there concentrations? And we obviously have a very strong concentration in Indiana, where Purdue is located. And Chicago, guess what, we have a lot of Purdue alums in Chicago. But then if you go across the rest of the country, calculated like students per million residents, and it's almost every state is between 25 to 50, and there's no real large pockets. I would say we've become a national university. And I think that is significant.

And I think that's one of the things like when you're talking to the Southern New Hampshire and Arizona online, there are some of us who are poised for growth and we would like to think that that's where we're headed in the next few years. So there are advantages of scale. And some of these institutions that are there like us are really able to grow. And we've been able to move with the increase

in demand that we've seen.

And I think one of the other things that is contributing to this obviously is COVID-19. I think if anything, what COVID has done, it has shifted forward everyone's willingness to accept online education, maybe by as much as a decade. And I think not only prospective students, but I think faculty and institutions, I think society in general, that this notion that we're going to do stuff online all of a sudden doesn't seem so weird, and maybe this can actually be a good model for us to have.

PAUL FAIN: I know you all have been busy the last few years. Could you talk a little bit about the program offerings and how they might have shifted and what you're looking forward to going forward, given all the uncertainty about the job market? I've got to think you all are doing a lot to kind of tweak what you offer.

FRANK DOOLEY: Yes and no. It turns out when you look at adult learners, for the most part my students are in their mid-thirties when they come back. About 70 percent of them are Pell-eligible, all right... So here... And one of the reasons Purdue wanted to buy Kaplan University and become Purdue Global is when you look at the historic land-grant mission, we're supposed to be serving the people of the state. And there was a segment in the state and across the country that simply were largely being ignored by higher education, especially the publics. So we've stepped into that.

But the people at that stage in their life, they are much more concerned about finding a degree that is going to help them improve their job. And I'll put my students into three groups, all right... About 40 percent of the students, 45 percent of the students that I have are in a job, working this particular job right now. A manager comes along to them, and she says, you know, Paul, you are a fabulous worker but you don't have a degree, and I don't have anywhere for you to go if you can't get some more education. And so they're coming in. They might be working, you know, as a finance clerk or something like that, and they have to get the degree in the field. About another 45 percent of my students are in a job and they think they need to pivot. And what they're actually looking for, they see automation at work. We launched a program in cyber security a year ago and I think were already up close to 1000 students in that program. So those folks are pivoting in their career. And a pivot would also include, so now I'm going to add a master's to my bachelor's and that kind of thing. And then have only around 10 percent of my students who are just coming because they made a promise to somebody, you know, themselves, their spouse, their children, and they're here. But even they are very concerned about will this help me move forward in my career? So compared to like a West Lafayette, Purdue Global is very, very zeroed in on making sure the degrees we have really tie to the expectations of the workforce and employers.

PAUL FAIN: And to do that, I assume you have to have some exchange of information with some key employers and some key regions as well?

FRANK DOOLEY: Well, and it comes from a number of ways. I would say we do have about 20 percent of our students, 25 percent of our students are coming to us through B2B connections. We're a partner with Guild, as you saw, and they'll share with you, these are skills that were looking for. So it's obviously an important research source for us.

The second thing, though, that we're doing is we're spending a lot of time, of our time, I have one my people who is in career services, she's the current president of NACE. Her name is Jenn Lasater. And Jenn has really immersed herself in the Emsi data, and we're studying that like crazy. We're looking at current job descriptions today, and that to us is really helping us where we need to be going right now.

And other thing that Global has that is just incredible and is probably one of our core competencies is the agility and our ability to respond to market changes. And I could give you a couple of examples, if you'd like.

PAUL FAIN: Yeah, please do. I think, you know, I remember speaking to Mitch Daniels when you all began this process, and he stressed a lot the speed that you all could respond when the market shifted.

FRANK DOOLEY: Yeah, I've got three, and you could cut be off after one or two if you want. The first is, my first name was May 1 and what I did in the first week, I talked to all my different deans and what do you do, etc. I got to the end of the first week and I talked to the dean of Nursing. And I said, hey, do you have public health, because I'm reading, or a heard a story this morning on Morning Edition about the shortage of contact tracers. She said, Absolutely. And I said, So what would it take for use to put out like a short certificate so we could train people to be contact tracers. She came back Monday, spent the weekend looking at CDC guidelines and World Health Organization guidelines. She said, Basically, if you have a degree in a medical area already or biology or something, it takes 8 to 10 hours of training. I have seven of the eight built. I'm missing this... By the end of that week, we had the course put together. We put it up. It's free. All right, so if anyone's looking to become a contact tracer, we have a course, and we have certified, I think we're closing in on 5000 contact tracers that have gone through this program. And that's part of being a public, right? There's a national need and the public institutions step forward to meet those needs.

Second one, George Floyd murder, sitting with... I was the mentor when I was on West Lafayette's campus in my prior role of the president that produced student government. Her name's Assata Gilmore. Assata is a brilliant young woman. She and her boyfriend were at my house for a socially distanced picnic the weekend after George Floyd was killed, and turns that her boyfriend, his name is Jarred, his dad is a Minneapolis police officer. And Jarred is Black, all right. And that is relevant to the story, because think about how everyone was just, the whole society, I mean, this has really been another defining event of 2020. And I have this terrible thing that I always think we got to able to fix problems. And I said, Jarred, What can we do? And Jarred says, Have you looked at Campaign Zero? And I said, I don't know what it is. I went, it was a Friday night, and I went and I looked at the Campaign Zero materials, and then ended up looking at the 2015 Obama Policing Commission materials. There's lots of material out there that suggests what do we need to do to shift policing from being what some call a warrior to a guardian, okay?

I went to my dean... We have 1400 criminal justice students at Global. I went to my dean and said, look at these. What I would like you to do is bring your faculty in and look at these guidelines and just tell me where are we. Two weeks later they come back and said, well, we're short. We fall far short of what we should be doing, and if I would give them the resources to update their courses, they would do that. And we already have this... We've built four microcredentials, one aimed at law enforcement officers, one aimed at police chiefs. The third one is aimed, about a month into this all of a sudden you heard "defund the police." Defund the police to me actually means that we're providing more social services, so we added one for those. And the last one is one in general just around diversity and inclusion. The microcredentials are plugged into the curriculum. And one of the ways we can be aggressive... You don't have to rebuilt the entire curriculum, you find pieces and plug it in. They went live in the end of August. And we've done that already. And we had a couple of other people said, look, it took us that long to get our committee together. And the faculty are really responsive.

And then the last one, real quick, is go back to the Emsi data. And you saw lots of jobs being posted like by Amazon, for example. Amazon's been hiring like crazy. And what are they looking for? Managers. So my team starts thinking, where are managers who've been displaced? Well, a lot of them are coming out of hotel, restaurant industries, people of 10, 15 years of managerial experience, no degree. And we have now put in program that's going to be voted on by my board of trustees this week in organizational leadership that will do like prior learning assessment and allow these individuals to gain credit for the experience they have, and hopefully we can start getting them back on track. So that kind of agility's just phenomenal, and it's just a lot of fun to be around that.

PAUL FAIN: Great examples, and it does seem to me to be an unusual pace for traditional higher ed. You know, just looking forward, I've been a believer that the Purdue brand was a going to be a pull nationally, so not surprised to hear that. But just wondering what you think the growth potential big

national universities that can do online quickly might be, because it feels to me that there's not too many of them, but the Purdue Globals and the Southern New Hampshires, and the new UAGC have advantages that small institutions might not.

FRANK DOOLEY: Well, Paul, you know, I think if you put a target on somebody, I mean, you look at SNHU and you look at Western Governors, and they're both over a 100,000 at this point. And my hunch is that they don't feel that they're done growing. I mean, we are actively, we would certainly want to become larger... I think, but growth for the sake of growth's sake, I'm also really interested in improving graduation rates and things like that, and results along the way. I've really said my areas are growth, because I do think we do a really good job for an overlooked segment of the population. The second thing I'm interested in are results, because, you know, we're an open admission campus. And a lot of open admission campuses graduation rates aren't very good. And the third thing that we're really zeroing on is innovation. And like what I've talked about, innovation and agility, so this ability to respond. So I hope if you talked in three or four years that we're at least double the size that we are today with a clear pathway to continue to grow.

PAUL FAIN: Well, Frank, it's been an interesting few years watching Purdue Global thus far. I hope we can keep in touch looking forward. I think it's going to be an interesting year for everybody, but particularly if you're focused in online education. But we'll leave it here. Thanks so much for the access and the time today. I really appreciate it.

FRANK DOOLEY: Well, Paul, I just want to wish you the best this holiday season, and, you know, stay safe. And what I now add, stay safe and stay sane.

PAUL FAIN: [LAUGH] Yes, that is good advice for all of us. Thanks, Frank.

FRANK DOOLEY: Thank you.

[MUSIC]

PAUL FAIN: This episode is sponsored by TimelyMD, a telehealth provider whose mission is to improve the well-being of college students by making virtual medical and mental health care accessible anytime, anywhere. With immediate medical care, scheduled and on-demand counseling, psychiatry and health

coaching services, TimelyMD partners with institutions to empower students to thrive in all aspects of their lives. Learn more at [timely.md](https://www.timely.md).

That's it for this episode, which is the last one for our inaugural season. But we'll be back 2021 with new episodes and a new host, Inside Higher Ed founder and co-editor, Doug Letterman. Thanks to all of you who tuned in to The Key during these unprecedented last eight months. And a special thanks to all the folks who joined me on the podcast. I appreciated your time and expertise. I'm leaving IHE at the end of the month, but time willing, I'll be back with a low-key bonus episode to revisit this season. And I may find my way back to podcasting next year. Hope you'll join me then. Take care and happy holidays!