

**[00:00:00] Bonni Stachowiak:** Today on episode number 345 of the *Teaching in Higher Ed* podcast, Transforming a University, with Adanely Jimenez, Adrian Delgado, and Jenny Vargas.

**[00:00:15] Production Credit:** Produced by Innovate Learning, maximizing human potential.

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**[00:00:24] Bonni:** Welcome to this episode of *Teaching in Higher Ed*. I'm Bonni Stachowiak, and this is the space where we explore the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. We also share ways to improve our productivity approaches so we can have more peace in our lives and be even more present for our students.

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On today's episode, I'm joined by three individuals who have changed the university where I teach immensely: Adanely Jimenez, Adrian Delgado, and Jenny Vargas. Adanely is a recent December 2020 graduate from Vanguard University, which is also where I teach. She has her bachelor's in Business Administration and was one of the members to start up the Living Well Community Resource Center.

The Center is a student-led organization for students to receive food and other supplies needed to help them through college. Adrian is a business administration major who enjoys spending his free time taking pictures, trying new things, and

helping others however he can. Jenny is a current undergraduate student, majoring in psychology at Vanguard University.

Jenny was recently part of a summer undergraduate research program that studied the experiences of first-generation college students. Some of Jenny's passions include decreasing negative stigmas about mental health and being an ally for those who live with a disability. Jenny, Adrian, and Adanely, welcome to *Teaching in Higher Ed*.

**[00:02:09] Jenny Vargas:** Hi.

**[00:02:10] Adrian Delgado:** Thank you for having us.

**[00:02:12] Adanely Jimenez:** Hi, thank you.

**[00:02:14] Bonni:** None of you have to go back as far as I do to remember your first early days of college, but I want to hear a little bit from you about your response of what you thought that college would be like and then how it actually turned out. I think I'll start with Jenny.

**[00:02:32] Jenny:** I think that I thought college is definitely going to be like the movies. I think I romanticized it very much, a lot of going out with friends, going to the beach, a lot of social things, just getting together, meeting new people, and it was. However, I think mentally, it was very, very overwhelmed overall, just because I knew that was going to learn about myself and have very, very new difficult challenges ahead of me, but I was like, "Oh, I'll get through it. It'll be fine. It'll be fine."

I did, and I have. However, when I was very much in the midst of it, I learned, very early on and very quickly, I can't do this alone. I need my friends, I need my professors, I need my family to back me up because especially as a first-generation college student when you have that new-- I guess the sense of this pressure that okay, you need to do it and you need to do it right, no mistakes, don't mess up, get your grades, get the scholarship, do whatever you have to do to succeed, failure isn't in the vocabulary, and it's not in the path at all.

Sometimes I did mess up, and when I did, I was just very, very hard on myself, and I had to learn to just give myself grace and go with my friends and have my little one-on-ones with them. I think that's how I thought college would be a lot more romanticized, very social, and all that stuff, but I wasn't expecting to be very overwhelmed very quickly right on. That was, I would say, definitely, my first two years. That's for me, so far.

**[00:04:13] Bonni:** Jenny, do you happen to remember either a TV show, a specific one, or a movie, a specific one that is representative of that fantasy of what college was going to be like?

**[00:04:23] Jenny:** Oh, that's so hard.

**[00:04:25] Bonni:** I know it may be hard.

**[00:04:27] Jenny:** *High School Musical* because they're always together. I know this is not a college, but I really thought that's how college was going to be. We go to classes and then we go hang out after school, we go get a coffee, and we just, I don't know, maybe break out into spontaneous singing or something like that. I don't know, but I don't know why I just did that. Yes, I think I would compare it to *High School Musical*. It was fun, it really was.

**[00:04:52] Bonni:** For people who may not be familiar with, if basically they haven't listened to the podcast or looked up where I happen to work or where you attend or attended school, we do, I just think about the brochures. It's not like they're lying because it is by the beach and it's beautiful, oh my gosh, Southern California, but once you're there, it's like yes, but it's not, it's not exactly like that. [laughs]

**[00:05:16] Jenny:** Yes, no one told you you're going to need a car to go to the beach. Just remember that, but we don't think about that.

**[00:05:20] Bonni:** I wonder how long it would take to walk there. That's a story for another day.

[laughter]

All right, let's go next to Adrian. How about for you? What did you think college would be like versus what it actually was?

**[00:05:34] Adrian:** Oh, actually, like Jenny, I thought it was going to be really social. I thought you were going to hang out with everyone there, you were going to be friends with everyone, you get to go out a lot, but in reality, it's not. Going to school is not what I thought it was going to be. I thought and was like, "Oh, I can breeze by," but it's actually very difficult.

In your first year, and as a first-gen college student, you have to face these obstacles that other people don't because you've never been through this before. What I had to do was basically learn by myself, "How am I going to do this? What do I do from here? What do I do next?" I feel like that was the very shocking moments. I got there and it's like, "This isn't what I thought it was, at all."

I was lucky to have a group of friends that helped me get through it. That was my support system. Two of them are here, Jenny and Adanely, and then Kayla, we had our other friend. Now, without them, I don't know what I would've done because it's just support you can count on. That's one of my biggest shockers of college.

**[00:06:30] Bonni:** When you think about that support, what do you remember about it specifically that was helpful? What was most helpful about what they were able to do for you?

**[00:06:40] Adrian:** What I remember was just being able to reach out to them and ask them for help, just be like, "Hey, what do I do? I'm stuck," or like, "Hey, I'm going through something, can you help me? Just give me your words of wisdom." Adanely is very wise, I've reached out to her so many times when I'm struggling, and she's just like, "Just calm down, you've got this."

There was this one instance where I called her crying, I don't know why, but she just told me, "Calm down, it's going to be fine, just breathe. God's with you." That's just the support that I like. They reassure you that you can do it.

**[00:07:13] Bonni:** All right. Adanely, what was it like for you versus what you thought versus what you got?

**[00:07:18] Adanely:** Well, I think, for me, I thought I was going to be prepared. I really thought that I was going to be able to nail college. I thought I had the tools. Again, I am a first-generation college student, but I've always been very determined. I've always pushed myself in school. I've always tried really hard. I thought, "College, yes, it's going to be hard, but I got this."

Going into college, it was like a slap to the face of just how unprepared I was because I remember an instant where you're getting to meet all these students. A lot of them know what they're going to do, a lot of them know words that just weren't in my vocabulary. I remember once they were like, "Oh, so what's your major?" I was like, "Major? What's a major?"

I'm going into college, and I'm like, "I don't even know what a major means." I think, for me, that was the biggest shock was just how much of college I had no clue of. It was hard navigating. It was hard trying to be smart, but yet I didn't know the basics of what a major was, what a degree was. I didn't even know what degree I was getting until later when I found out, "Oh, I'm getting my bachelor's, that's what I'm getting."

It was hard. A lot of people are like, "Yes, you can do it. College is possible. It's easy." No, it's not. To be completely honest, it was hard. I can't sugarcoat it because if there is students watching us, it's hard mentally, it's hard physically. It's hard. Again, I'm super grateful for the friends that I had that I've found. I really do believe God placed them in my life because they helped me grow.

They helped me become better. They helped me navigate through the unknown. I'm super grateful too, for the professors that took the time to get to know me, to talk to me, to help me. There was a time where I had missed my FAFSA deadline, and that was my way of getting money to go to school. Just being able to just go to my professors' offices and talking to them and them really taking the time to

listen to me, pray for me, and just be there for me, that was just such a boost of confidence that I needed because they saw in me what I couldn't see.

Just with their help, their support, and their love towards me just made me want to push even more, even when I was at the lowest point that I could have been in college. I am grateful, and I think that that definitely helped me get through it. Yes, at the beginning, I thought I was ready for college, but I was very quickly reminded just how unprepared I was.

**[00:10:01] Bonni:** Now that we're exploring a little bit about those feelings and realities of not being as prepared as we'd like, what were some of the hurdles that you each experienced in college or perhaps even that you would like to share about what you saw friends experiencing? Let's start, this time, with Adrian.

**[00:10:21] Adrian:** Let's see some hurdles that I experienced. I think paying for college is one of them since I was a first-gen student, it's like you realize how expensive it can get, like books, your supplies, all the stuff you need. If something breaks down, I'll use an example right now, my laptop, I had it for three years. It broke, I don't know ... whatever amount of cost.

It's like I have to get it replaced, so that's a big hurdle. Then my first year, I actually had to pay out-of-pocket for school, not a lot, but that was really hard for me because I wasn't expecting to. I think that was a big hurdle. Another hurdle is just the load work that they give you, you're not prepared for it. Sometimes some professors will give you so much work that it's like, "Well, where do I have the time to do this? I have five other classes that I'm taking, but this one's consuming so much."

Just managing my time was something, a hurdle that I to get over and had to practice because I said, "If you don't do this right now, you're not going to be able to do it down the line when it gets harder." That was my biggest obstacle.

**[00:11:24] Bonni:** I remember I was giving a workshop to faculty right before we started a school year about Canvas. I was really surprised that-- I hope it doesn't sound like I'm insulting them, but it was just one of those things I thought they would always know that when they put their assignments and tests and due dates and all

that in Canvas, that when you saw it on your end, it wasn't just their class, it was all of your classes. [laughs]

I was like-- I remember trying to force my face to not look the way that it was looking because I'm like, "How could you not understand that a student would see not just your class in Canvas but all the classes combined but backed up all there?" I think about that all those years ago, I wish that we all could see that all the time. Obviously, we have our own classes.

On our calendars, we can see all of our class dates in there, but I wish that we could have eyes to be able to see what that load looks like, of the five classes or the six classes and just be able to really empathize, I think, a little bit better. In fact, I was at the Canvas conference a few years ago. In some schools, this is rare, by the way, but in some schools, it was I think master's programs, but they would actually coordinate their due dates so that there wasn't any week where there's going to be three exams on the same day or that kind of thing.

I definitely think that there's room for improvement, and I'm not insulting our school specifically. This is definitely a challenge that I haven't heard about from around the world. Jenny, how about you? What do you think of when you think about challenges that you experienced or that you remember friends sharing with you?

**[00:13:07] Jenny:** I think some difficulties, for me and from others that I've heard, are being away from home for the first time, especially coming from a Latino, Hispanic background. Our culture is very family-oriented, very family-first. The longest I had been away from home before I went to college is probably two weeks, and it was when I was in Mexico.

That means I went, probably the longest, two weeks without seeing my mom, my dad, and my brother, just my immediate family. When I went to college and I didn't see them the first two weeks and I thought to myself, "When am I going to see them again?" it really hit me that one time, and I started crying, and I didn't know what to do. Of course, I had my friends telling me because they could also relate to what I was feeling.

Definitely, being homesick a lot of times, too, also looking around the community and just getting familiarized with it, I didn't have my car at first out there, but once I got in and I was driving around, I felt very, very isolated. I was like, "Where am I? I have no idea where I am. I don't know this community. Where is the nearest ... Where can I go get an ice cream or things like that?" because those are the kind of things I did back home.

Obviously, I know where everything is here, but when I was over there, I was like, "Where am I going to go when I need something?" and things like that, too. I think also having to prepare to have those tough conversations with the parents. What I mean by that is like when I would tell my mom that "I have this really, really big exam coming up, I don't know what to do. I'm stressed."

She would just tell me, "Well, just study. Just all you have to do is study, that's it, just study." Of course, she's totally right, but I had never-- It was just so much new material. I didn't know how to study that I was like, "Do I have to memorize every single term? How do professors give tests in college? How is it different? Am I expected to write a certain way, what?"

It was very like all these little details that I never had to think about before because I had been in this school system where I've grown up, which is Palm Springs, and it was all the same. Suddenly, I went out here, and everyone did things differently, and it was hard to keep up with. I think that was definitely a really, really big thing, too. Just being with so many, really, in my eyes, a diverse population at Vanguard, it was amazing.

I remember going around and I was wearing-- because I grew up Catholic. I was wearing a little Virgin Mary necklace, and some girl looked at me, and she said, "Why are you wearing that? That's a sin." I said, "Excuse me?" She was like, "Yes, why are you wearing that? This is a Christian school, why are you wearing that?" I really didn't expect that in my head.

Up until that moment, I really thought, "Oh my gosh, I thought everyone was Catholic." All of my family members and everyone that I had seen out here in the



Valley, where I grew up, I thought we were all Catholic. It was a really big 180 slap-in-the-face thing for me being around a whole diverse group of people and students who obviously were my age, but I really thought everyone that was my age thought exactly the way I did.

It was very much like tunnel vision, pure ignorance. I just didn't know. I was just opening my eyes a lot, too, the first time. That's what me and my friends talk about a lot. We're like, "I didn't know that other people did this," or like, "I didn't know that." I don't know, so many things I can think of right now, but those are some of the things. It's difficult because, again, all of it at once is very overwhelming. It was hard to get used to it, at the same time. I would say those are some of the biggest things that I went through in my first two years of college.

**[00:16:59] Bonni:** Oh, I love the power of just how you told that story. I'm not sure I'd have the fortitude to tell it quite that way. [chuckles] I might be still carrying around some anger [clears throat] around that. Just the way you described it, really, truly, I don't know if you meant this, but so much of that can be the beauty when we can not have our first response to just completely disengage and decide, "I'm done with you forever" kind of thing that you could describe it the way you described it now and just that ignorance because that's what those kinds of comments are, but that's something so special to you.

That's part of your life, your family, your belief system. Wow. All right. Adanely, how about you? What are some of the hurdles that you experienced or that you had friends share with you about their experience?

**[00:17:51] Adanely:** I think some of the hurdles that I went through was definitely how Adrian said the money. Money was definitely one of the hurdles that I know I went through and I know a lot of other students went through. I remember just the way the school system was set up. You can get lunch certain dates, certain times, and if you didn't make it in those times, then you weren't able to get food.

Sometimes I would go I don't want to say days, but I would go a day. I didn't really get a meal because I had a next class, I couldn't make that meal at that time that

it was available for me to get it or whatever. I would definitely spend some times in class thinking more about "I'm hungry, and I want to get something to eat, but I don't have money to go buy something."

Sometimes it was difficult to stay concentrated. Then knowing that my family wasn't close, my parents, they moved to Oklahoma my freshman year, so it wasn't like I could go home and pick up some, I couldn't do that. Those were some of the things that I went through that were a little difficult and just definitely not having anybody there. I couldn't just go home on the weekend and spend time with my family because they were so far away, and that caused a lot of depression.

I'm not going to lie, there was moments where I would be in my room crying in the bathroom, just because I just felt so alone, yet I did have friends. They were great, they were amazing, but when you're really alone at night and you're just thinking about how there is no one there, it does hit you pretty hard. Like Jenny said, I'm very, very much family-oriented, they mean everything to me.

Just having that shock to me, just knowing that I was by myself and I had to find a way to get through it and I couldn't give up because, like Jenny said, failure wasn't an option, I had to keep going because everyone was looking for me to be successful to graduate and to do something different. I know that happened with a lot of students. Many students were like, "I have a need, I didn't get to eat." They would spend more time thinking about food in class than about the lecture. Just things like that that I had a couple, I struggled a little bit.

**[00:20:20] Bonni:** Actually, I want to fast-forward us a little bit and have you tell me about the meeting with Dr. Jackson in the fall of 2019, where I know it was one of the spaces where you began to share these conversations in a more public way or at least in a more public way with someone like a professor. Who would like to start with this story?

**[00:20:42] Adrian:** I remember we were talking with Dr. Jackson, it was early September of 2019. We were just talking to her about what we were going through, the problems we had because I was going through some problems at home

because my mother wasn't working. We were just going through some financial troubles. We were just talking over how things would get better, what we could do.

Then she had, on her syllabus, this email that they were starting a resource center at school, but no one really knew about it. It was just there. She was the only one that had it on her syllabus at the time. Not many professors had it, even though it wasn't out of faculty. We liked the idea of saying, "Hey, we would like to help with that. Is there any way we could help?" She said, "Yes, you connect it to Amanda."

Then from there, it just happened. I think it was a very powerful meeting that day, just because we got to share a lot of what we were going through. Dr. Jackson's an amazing person. She's amazing. She helped me a lot. I talk to her by myself, I will go into her office and just talk to her about what's going on in my life, some issues that I've had, and every time I leave her office, I feel enlightened. That's why I feel like she was a great person to talk to and is one of the reasons that we got involved

**[00:22:00] Bonni:** Now, I obviously wasn't there in the room because you would've seen me, it's not that big, at all. [laughs] In some ways, I feel like I've got some pictures of what it might have been if I had gotten to hear your stories. Either Adanely or Jenny, would you tell a story, if you remember this at all, about a chain of establishments that other students would get to visit and you're like, "Wait, I missed dinner today"?

Do you know what I'm talking about where it's like, okay, you're hearing about other people who went to here, and then they went to here, and then they went to here, and then to here? Do you know what I'm talking about?

**[00:22:36] Adanely:** Yes, I remember it well because we were talking about just how, obviously, it's a Christian school, it's a private school, so some kids have money. We would hear about students going to Disneyland, students going out to eat every day, and just spending their money like crazy, and then we were here like, "If you don't know where to spend it, you can give it to me because I really need it."

It was just like, "Wow, I can't believe these students are able to do this. I'm over here struggling, but yet you guys--" It wasn't like we were envious. That was not the issue.

It was like, "Dang, I wish I could do that, but I have to spend my money wisely, and I have to make this money stretch. I got to make this dollar stretch." Yes, it was a little hard just hearing everybody like, "Hey, we're going to Disneyland this weekend," or "Hey, we're doing this weekend." We were just like, "Have fun and take pictures."

**[00:23:33] Bonni:** Earlier, we were talking about textbooks, and that was, for me, when I first became a professor. I didn't really have an appreciation of, relatively speaking, how expensive textbooks can be. I knew how much they cost, but do you know what I mean, how difficult, what a burden that that was because when I was in college, my mom would just come with the credit card and swipe it?

I could not tell you how much they cost because it wasn't on my diamond. She wouldn't even like to look at the recommended reading. Back then, they would have the recommended reading sitting out, too, and she'd be just like all kinds of books. That was a big cultural difference for me. I suppose you could also probably say a class difference, not just culturally but class-wise, too, where I had to learn, "Wow, I need to have my eyes opened so that I can do a better job."

I've really radically changed how I think about textbooks, and it's not just me, but there's a lot of change that's happening in higher education, I think for the better, when it comes to recognizing both the costs associated but also the inequities that perpetuate through traditional textbooks. This part of the story, you started telling us about going to see Dr. Jackson, and then she connected you with someone named Amanda Lebrecht, who I have the great privilege of working really closely with, and that's actually how I came to know all of you, which is really great.

Then all of a sudden-- not all of a sudden, over many, many months and lots of hard work, the Living Well Community Resource Center opened in I believe it was January of 2020. It's a wonderful story, but I don't want to dismiss the amount of work that went into that. Amanda is just a really wonderful leader, and I know she's been such a tremendous difference in each of your lives, and there are countless people.

I was going through this PowerPoint slide deck, and it has all these photos of all these, including you and your friends who helped to launch the Center as well. I'm just thinking back to all the people that really had to work so hard and sacrifice so much for it to open. I'm going to ask Jenny this question. Jenny, if people were able to come visit Vanguard and come inside the living room, could you give us an audible tour of what we would see at the Living Well Community Resource Center? What's there, and what's it like?

**[00:26:02] Jenny:** Yes, of course. It's changed a lot since it first opened in January. At first, we didn't even have a sign. You go in a building that's a little bit far away from campus on the left side, and you keep going, and you should see a sign that says Living Well. You go in there, and it's definitely very hidden, it's not out in the open. We purposely chose a location like that because we know that a lot of students, again, especially coming from, I don't know, a little bit more, I want to say, Hispanic, Latino backgrounds because that's definitely since Vanguard is an HSI, Hispanic Serving Institution.

A lot of the students who actually need help happen to be from that culture. There's a lot of-- I don't want to say shame, but there's a lot of-- We just want to keep it hidden.

We don't want to because no one's ever going raising their hands like, "Hey, I need help. Can you give me free food?" or something like that. There's a lot of pride in all that stuff, so because of that, we kept it like, "Hey, we can keep it over here to the left side hidden, just so students feel more comfortable and are willing to actually go and want to ask for help."

You see that sign, you walk in. There should be at least two people that are greeting you. One of them will ask you, "Hey, have you filled out the little questionnaire?" On that questionnaire, we just ask, "How many times do you plan on coming here a week, a month, a year?" things like that. It's just to help us see how much food we need throughout the year, keep a track of that, too.

Then, also, we ask for the student ID. Again, it's anonymous. We just thought that we're not going to go look it up, but it helps us keep track of how many people we are serving every single week or every single day. Again, those numbers we go and show the president of the school, people who have more power to say, "Hey, you can keep running the Center. It's actually working and making a difference" and things like that.

You walk in, you should see a beautiful sign whiteboard. It says, "Welcome to Living Well Resource Center." We have the hours right there, and immediately, you see all the food. There's a bunch of chips, snacks, canned goods we recently got. Over the summer when I went over there, there was two new fridges, and that wasn't like that before, it used to be carpet, and we couldn't have fridges like that.

There was a whole process of it getting approved. Then once we had the fridges, we got milk, yogurt, fresh produce, orange, apples, things like that, too. Currently, I don't think there's a limit. You can basically take as much as you want. We encourage that, too, because the food is there for so long as sometimes students don't always go. We don't want it to go to waste, so we encourage, "Hey, take as much as you need, as you can" or things like that, too.

The people that are there, they'll ask you, "Is there anything you're specifically looking for, or is there any other day that you think can come?" If we don't have the item that they want, we would just recommend them to come another day at a specific time so that way, they find what they're actually looking for. There's also a little closet in the back, and that has a lot of feminine products and also shaving cream, pencils, and books.

There's a lot of clothes there, shoes, things like that that people don't want anymore, and they just donate to the Center. We can look through there, and you can see whatever you want. Nothing is not for grabs. You can really just take what you need. That's why it's there. That's why the Resource Center is there. There's a little corner for a bunch of snacks, too, that you can just get.

Maybe you need to eat something during class, you don't have time to go to the cafeteria because sometimes the hours just don't match up classes. The point is, we have that. Hopefully, no one has to think, "What am I going to eat?" or "Can I have a snack?" or things like that, too. I would say it's really, really, really small, but it's definitely very, very impactful. Definitely, you just walk in, you do a whole loop. That's how I would describe it: a whole loop. Yes, that's what I would say.

**[00:30:14] Bonni:** I wanted to mention that actually, we were very fortunate to be partnered up with a food bank here in Orange County, California called the Second Harvest Food Bank. When you were describing, Jenny, some of the requirements, we couldn't have this, we couldn't have that, it was because they, in really good ways, would audit our operation to make sure that we are--

For example, one of the things I remember is the reason that they're asking for people to document their information that we have to assure that no one is being discriminated against. Anyone in our Vanguard University community, faculty, staff, students, anyone can come and receive the help that they need. That's part of their auditing process with us.

Of course, the food safety precautions have to be there as well. They've been a wonderful partner with us. I just wanted to mention that I just feel really grateful that we were able to be connected. I might not get this right, so please correct me if any of you know the correct stats, but for college food banks, most of them closed down in the pandemics in our county. I think we're one of-- Is it one of three that we're able to--

**[00:31:20] Adrian:** ... We were able to stay open.

**[00:31:23] Bonni:** Yes. It's different now. We don't have as many people living on campus and not as many people going to campus for classes, et cetera, but just that that's still able to be accessed, I think it's more important, probably than ever. When I just think about the timing, it's pretty amazing, too, thinking about January 2020. None of us could have foreseen what was about to happen and just how

great that we had that support system throughout all of what we've been all experiencing. Yes, Adrian.

**[00:31:54] Adrian:** I just wanted to add talking about these unusual times. We were excited. We didn't know what was going to happen in March. Us launching in January of 2020 was amazing because we got this exposure, but then once everything started to close, we had things that you cannot find at grocery stores. We had pasta, canned goods. A lot of our guests said, "This is a lifesaver for us because we've been going to the store every day, and we can't find anything."

Coming here, it's helpful, and just that it's free makes it even better because we get to see these people happy, saying, "Oh my God, I finally have something. We have this, just in case. We have all this." Just carrying certain goods like produce, milk now with the fridges, it makes it bigger. People are just able to come and enjoy stuff without having to spend their money because that's our goal.

We want people to have food. We want to reduce food insecurities. That was the goal of Living Wealth Center for the food pantry part of it, just to make sure no one goes without a meal, and that's just one of our things that we're really focusing on.

**[00:32:55] Bonni:** Adrian, would you tell us the exciting news about what's next for the Living Well Community Resource Center?

**[00:33:00] Adrian:** I guess so. We're launching phase two of Living Well Resource Center. Actually, this month, starting the 20th, we're launching the Career Closet. It's a partnership with the Career Center. People can donate clothes, professional clothing for interviews, for their jobs, and people are going to be able to make an appointment through career services and pick out clothes.

We're going to have their sizes pulled out for them. It's going to be a very personal experience, personal enough with COVID guidelines because we have to make sure we're safe. We're going to have personal shoppers for the students that are going to be using it. We're going to fill out a quick survey like, "What size are you? What size do you need? Is this for an interview for your job or for a career fair?"



Then we're going to pull out everything that's their size so that way, they're able to look at these options like pants, shirts, accessories, handbags, shoes, and we're going to have all that. We want to make sure that people that might not be able to afford professional clothing, that they're going to be able to get it for free. We're not doing a thing where we let you borrow it. You got to keep these clothes. In case you need them in the future, they're yours to keep and yours to be used whenever you want to use them.

**[00:34:11] Bonni:** I'm going to read something that was posted on Instagram after the Center launched and then we'll go into the recommendations segment. This was on Instagram, and this is someone who responded to a post. You probably even remember this. It was so early on and exciting to see people were posting pictures of the first meals that they prepared with food that they had received.

This is someone's response. "When this initiative was announced, I cried. The summer between my sophomore and junior years, I ate either one packet of oatmeal and one can of ravioli or a packet of ramen nearly every day. I was working, but my resources were very, very limited. To have had access to something like this would have been an absolute life raft for me.

"I'm so grateful to know that our university is aware of students who may be going through a season of food insecurity and are doing something so proactive and generous about it today. This is beautiful. Thank you for sharing the progress of this program." Thank you to all three of you for sharing your stories today. We're going to move over to the recommendations segment.

Before we get to the recommendations segment of today's episode, I just wanted to take a moment and thank today's sponsor, and that is SaneBox. When we think about our emails, so many times, it can seem overwhelming, all of that information flying at us and not prioritized very well. Well, what SaneBox does is it scans the headers of your emails and sorts them into intelligent folders that are more prioritized than your email might normally be.

Important email arrives and stays in your inbox, but those distraction emails are moved into, for example, a Sane later folder for you to have a look at not during the prime time of your day but in a time when you just can quickly skim through them and see if there's anything important to you. There are all kinds of other features. One that I love is I can blind-carbon-copy SaneBox and have it remind me if I don't get a reply to an email in a certain number of days.

I don't have to add it to my tasks list or, otherwise, do extra work to make sure that someone gets the response that they are looking for. It's, really, a wonderful service, and we've been using it. Both Dave and I have been using it for a number of years now and get so much out of it. It's a very integral part of our productivity system and really integral for managing our inbox.

If you head over to [sanebox.com/tihe](https://sanebox.com/tihe), they will give you a free 14-day trial and also a \$25 credit toward your subscription. Again, that was [sanebox.com/tihe](https://sanebox.com/tihe), and SaneBox can help you take back control of your inbox. Thanks, again, SaneBox for sponsoring today's episode. I wanted to recommend that if anyone feels inspired and moved by the story, I wanted to recommend a few organizations that you could donate to, to support this kind of work.

First off, I'd love to see those of you interested in donating to the Living Well Community Resource Center at Vanguard University. I'll have a link in the show notes. There's a donation page. It's really easy to do and would be a wonderful way to support the three people joining me today in their sharing their story and just the inspiration of what a difference they have made for our institution.

In fact, I titled this episode Transforming a University, and that is what you three have done, as well as your colleagues who weren't able to be with us today. The second organization is a nationwide organization. It's the Hope Center. I've had a prior guest, Sara Goldrick-Rab, who has talked about the #RealCollegeInitiative, and they have some wonderful programs to support research.

In fact, we didn't just open the Center, but we also did some research to support the need for it. We did our own basic needs survey, and we used their foundational

data set in order to establish our questions and research methodology. That's a wonderful organization. Lastly, I'd just like to share about the Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County, which is the organization that we're partnered with, not the only one but just the major one that's, I think twice a week, showing up and providing those deliveries of food and other non-perishables, so another wonderful organization to give to. Adanely, I'm going to pass it over to you for your recommendation.

**[00:38:51] Adanely:** I think my recommendation would be definitely for teachers, professors. Just take the moment to get to know your students, ask them questions, take those final five minutes of class just to pull two or three students and just talk to them, ask them how their day is, really, ask them what's going on, what are they going through?

I was grateful to have professors that did that, took the time to ask me what was wrong, if I was okay, how it was going, and it just builds a relationship. It builds just being able to just speak to my professors more openly. When I was going through something, it was easier for me to be real and tell them, "Hey, this is what I'm struggling with." I think that even if it's 5 minutes, 10 minutes that you take just to speak, just to let them know that you're there and that you care about their future and you care about them, it's such a boost of confidence. It's such a motivation to know that you're there to help me and you care about my future.

**[00:39:54] Bonni:** Thank you. Adrian, how about you?

**[00:39:57] Adrian:** I have a show to recommend. It's on Netflix. It's called *Designated Survivor*. It's a conspiracy thriller, drama, action TV show. It's only three seasons, but I feel like most people would really enjoy it. It's about the government, and I just want-- I had nothing to do this winter break, so I just went on Netflix, and I had remembered watching the first episode where I came back about when it came out three years ago and never watched it again, but then it popped up on my recommended.

I binge-watched it, I finished all three seasons in less than a week, not the best thing to do but it's a really good show, so I recommend people watch it. It's called *Designated Survivor*.

**[00:40:34] Speaker 2:** Thank you so much. Jenny, how about you?

**[00:40:38] Jenny:** I recommend a book called *Trauma Stewardship*. It's called, also, *An Everyday Guide To Caring For Self While Caring For Others*. It's by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky with Connie Burk, and it really emphasizes the self-care, self-love, self-grace, self-respect, caring for yourself, especially in a time where I think we can definitely ignore that because there's so much going on, and it's like you don't know how much mentally and physically you're putting your body through.

Yes, I definitely, definitely recommend, it's super cool. It's a really easy read, and I really like it because I've just learned new ways to take care of myself. Yes, and it definitely emphasizes also, I would add, how much the trauma that we see on an everyday basis, from not even just as an essential worker, whether it be in medical, mental, or whatever department of it, but just even growing up, so the things we experience, how they shaped us, whether we consciously recognize it or not, how they shaped our worldview. Yes, it's really, really cool, and I really, really like it.

**[00:41:54] Bonni:** Oh, all three of these recommendations sound so good, and I don't want you to shame yourself, Adrian, for binge-watching because if you do, then I have to. [laughs]

**[00:42:04] Adrian:** I'm thinking so.

**[00:42:04] Bonni:** I can't even share the shows that I've been binge-watching because I have to save them up for future recommendations, but people will hear about it in future episodes, I've definitely been doing my share. I think you're talking about trauma, Jenny, that it's so important that we don't numb ourselves because sometimes we need to feel all the feelings, but then there is sometimes healthy compartmentalization.

I think that perhaps Adrian can be our Netflix binger sometimes or, in my case, Hulu or Apple TV+, there's so much good stuff out there. All right, so thank you, all three of you, for joining me on today's episode of *Teaching In Higher Ed*. I've been excited about this conversation since we first started talking about doing this. I didn't mention this earlier, but Adanely was in my class this last semester.

I thought about it for a while, and I just awkwardly, randomly brought it up with her, and then she brought it back up with me, and here we are today. It's just such a great honor to get to hear your story and have others get to hear about it as well. Any time I ever have students come on the podcast, it's always some of the people's favorite episodes because we love to hear your stories, and this is an incredible, incredible story.

You've done amazing work. I know, Adanely, you've already graduated, but the other two of you when you graduate in another semester, you're leaving this place behind, it's never going to be the same because of you.

**[00:43:23] Adrian:** Thank you.

**[00:43:24] Jenny:** Thank you.

**[00:43:25] Adanely:** Thank you. That's so sweet.

[music]

**[00:43:32] Bonni:** Thanks once again to Adanely Jimenez, Adrian Delgado, and Jenny Vargas for joining me for today's episode of *Teaching In Higher Ed*, number 345, Transforming a University. Thanks to all of you for listening. If you would like to sign up for the weekly *Teaching in Higher Ed* updates, you can do that over at [teachinginhighered.com/subscribe](https://teachinginhighered.com/subscribe).

Even if you've been subscribing for a while, there's a new format that you might have noticed in the recent week or two, and I hope that you're enjoying that new way of getting even more out of the *Teaching In Higher Ed* podcast. See you next time.

[music]

**[00:44:32] [END OF AUDIO]**

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