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# "100 CHALLENGES FACING STUDENTS OF COLOR IN THE 21st CENTURY"

Dennis Rahiim Watson

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# "100 CHALLENGES FACING STUDENTS OF COLOR IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY"

**Dennis Rahiim Watson**

**"It is particularly critical to assess the impact, given the empirical data available, on institutions in California, Texas, Florida and Washington which anti-affirmative action laws and court orders have been passed/handed down."**

With the intellectually dishonest anti-affirmative action sentiment still having a chilling effect on many public institutions it is critical to assess the impact of these efforts not only on student recruitment and retention, but that of faculty and staff as well.

It is particularly critical to assess the impact, given the empirical data available, on institutions in California, Texas, Florida and Washington which anti-affirmative action laws and court orders have been passed/handed down. We will also analyze data gathered from Connecticut's Majority Retreat, an annual think-tank gathering of faculty and staff of color in higher education to network, share data and engage in strategic planning.

Additionally, we will closely scrutinize the efforts of private and public institutions to address racial/cultural diversity among its faculty and staff. (e.g., Wheaton College Eastern Connecticut State University, Harvard).

Given the increasing racial diversity of this nation's urban areas as well as southern and border states, the increased competition for students-again, more of whom will be students of color - there needs to be an assessment of the linkage between a significant presence of faculty and staff of color the recruitment, retention and success of students of color.

Let us be clear, as Turrier and Myers poignantly point out, "The 90's trends aside, affirmative action in faculty hiring was never robust. Without legal challenges to 'reverse discrimination', many departments within colleges and universities always voiced great skepticism about affirmative action..."

It is against that backdrop, coupled with, in most instances, the growing number of students of color on college campuses that the issue of increased commitment to hire and retain faculty and staff of color.

## **Presenter:**

Dynamic, charismatic, inspirational, motivational, uplifting and energetic! These are just a few of the adjectives used to describe **Dennis Rahiim Watson**, one of America's most motivational speakers. Dennis Rahiim Watson was kicked out of high school 37 times and has overcome tremendous odds to become what critics and audiences describe as a cross between Jesse Jackson, Bill Cosby and Les Brown. Watson is the president and CEO of the National Black Youth Leadership Council which is based in New York. He

was educated at Harlem Preparatory School, Fordham University, Pace University and New York University. Watson has lectured and conducted workshops at over 200 colleges and universities nationwide, in Harvard, Yale, Cornell, Howard, Morehouse, UCLA, Columbia, Hampton, Fisk, Vanderbilt, Brown, Stanford, University of Alaska, University of California at Berkeley, Northwestern, University of Miami and Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Watson has received over 250 awards for his work with black youth nationwide, among them five White House citations.