



Dr. Erin Stresow is a seasoned higher education executive and organizational strategist with nearly two decades of leadership experience spanning Tribal government, nonprofits, corporate environments and in higher education advancing student success, institutional resilience, and community-centered leadership. With a PhD in Business Administration focused on Organizational Leadership and Development and advanced work toward an EdD in Educational Leadership, she brings a rare blend of academic rigor, operational expertise, and culturally grounded leadership. Her career is defined by a commitment to student-centered success, institutional sustainability, honoring lived experiences, and advancing equity through data-informed strategy and inclusive excellence.

Dr. Stresow currently serves in executive leadership roles within higher education, most recently as Executive Director of Equitable Student Success at the Community College of Aurora and Senior Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Colorado State University Pueblo. In these roles, she has led large scale, institution-wide initiatives that integrate cross-functional divisions from academic affairs, student services, workforce development, and the creation and implementation of comprehensive equity centered strategic plans to improve enrollment, retention, and completion outcomes.

Her data-informed strategies have resulted in measurable gains in student retention and strengthened pathways for first-generation, adult, non-traditional, and Indigenous learners. As a collaborative leader, she is known for aligning institutional mission and vision with actionable strategy, ensuring that every decision advances student success, belonging, faculty and staff success, and long-term community impact.

A recognized expert in organizational transformation, Dr. Stresow has led large-scale change initiatives across complex systems, including accreditation processes, institutional restructuring, and crisis management. Notably, she played a leadership role during the closure of Iowa Wesleyan University, ensuring compliance with accreditation standards while supporting

Presidential Finalist 2026



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partnerships with Tribal Nations, K–12 systems, workforce agencies, and higher education institutions to strengthen educational pipelines and regional economic development. She understands Tribal Colleges as anchors of cultural preservation, language revitalization, and community wellbeing.

In addition to her executive leadership, Dr. Stresow is an accomplished educator, having taught undergraduate and graduate courses in business management across multiple institutions and modalities. She is also the founder of a consulting company focused on organizational development, equity strategy, and leadership coaching. Known for her relational leadership style, strategic clarity, and ability to operationalize vision into measurable outcomes, Dr. Stresow is a transformative, servant leader committed to advancing student success, institutional resilience, and community impact.



students, faculty, and staff through transition. Her experience spans governance, human resources, finance, and compliance, including manage students, faculty, and staff through transition. Her experience spans governance, human resources, finance, and compliance, including management of federal grants, COVID-19 response strategy, and workforce restructuring within Tribal government and higher education systems.

Her work is deeply rooted in her commitment to culturally responsive leadership. Through her service with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and MLCV, she supported leadership across all branches of Tribal government and the corporation and integrated The Anishinaabe Seven Grandfather Teachings into organizational strategy, leadership development, and workforce systems. She continues to champion culturally grounded education models that center identity, language, and community. She brings extensive experience working for Hispanic Serving Institutions and Minority Institutions as well as presenting at national conferences educating peers about the various types of higher education institutions including Tribal Colleges and Land Grant Institutions. She has built