

**Finalist:** Dr. Michael Odu

**Title:** Vice President of Instructions at San Diego Miramar College

Dr. Michael Odu is a product of the community college system. He has served the system in various capacities through lenses of equity, race-consciousness, and social justice, and he is currently the Vice President of Instruction at San Diego Miramar College. Dr. Odu holds the strong conviction that community colleges should embrace the changing global economy and develop better informed citizens of the world. As such, he has led the effort to change institutional structures and cultures by reimagining the students' experience and journey and supporting the success of student groups historically excluded from higher education and for whom higher education was not designed.

Before joining San Diego Miramar College, Dr. Odu served as the Dean of Mathematics, Science, and Engineering at Southwestern College. While at Southwestern College, he worked with faculty, staff, and administrators through participatory governance structures to promote academic integrity, facilitate innovation, and develop clear goals and objectives that served students. He oversaw the construction of the \$78 million state of the art Math and Science building and provided leadership in securing more than \$5 million in grants that improved equity and success in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

Dr. Odu is an academic who has a long relationship serving students and a deep commitment to the scholarship of teaching and learning. He was a professor of Mathematics at Daytona Beach Community College and at Hillsborough Community College, both in Florida. He has published and presented in his field as well as on culturally responsive teaching methodologies. During his time at Hillsborough, Dr. Odu served as Special Assistant to the Campus President on Strategic Initiatives and the faculty coordinator for HOPE Scholars – a targeted minority student success program designed to improve retention, graduation, and the four-year college transfer rate of African-American and Hispanic males.

Dr. Odu serves in a number of professional capacities, including a co-advisor of Black Student Union and Phi Theta Kappa Honors, a fellow at Stanford University's Education Partnership for Internationalizing Curriculum, on the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office's CCCApply Taskforce, and on the Board of Directors of Phi Theta Kappa – American Association of Community College's official honor society for two-year colleges. He is also actively involved in community engagements such as the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, Lymphoma and Leukemia Society Light the Night Walk, and American Heart Society HeartWalk.

Dr. Odu holds a Ph.D. in Mathematics Education, an M.Sc. in Mathematical Sciences, a B.Sc. in Mathematics, and an A.A. in Computer Science. As an administrator, his forte has been an equity-minded, inclusive, and flexible approach to academic and operational leadership, making decisions based on data and with an eye on solid pedagogical/andragogical approaches to curricula development and review. He has demonstrated throughout his career an understanding of the role that a comprehensive community college plays in uplifting the intellectual, cultural, economic, and social mobility of the community it serves.