

Transcript of Oral History of Anonymous

Interviewer: Corryn McPherson

Interviewee: Anonymous

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Abstract: Corryn McPherson interviews an anonymous University at Buffalo [UB] student about his experience going to school during the COVID pandemic. Topics include UB's response to the pandemic, the students living situation, the students family, and learning online.

Corryn McPherson 00:01

Would you like to remain anonymous?

Interviewee 00:02

Yes, I do.

Corryn McPherson 00:04

Okay. So what school do you attend?

Interviewee 00:06

I attend the University at Buffalo [UB] and I'm a junior in second semester.

Corryn McPherson 00:12

Okay. How old are you?

Interviewee 00:13

I'm 21 years old.

Corryn McPherson 00:14

And how old were you when COVID started?

Interviewee 00:18

I was 17 at the time.

Corryn McPherson 00:21

And what year are you in?

Interviewee 00:22

And I was a freshman during the peak of COVID.

Corryn McPherson 00:26

Okay. So where were you when COVID started?

Interviewee 00:29

I was located in my dorm room on Richmond campus, and I actually was one of the few students who stayed on campus while everybody departed back to their residence.

Corryn McPherson 00:45

Okay. Were you forced to go home or was it an option or you chose to stay?

Interviewee 00:52

The university had given several students the option to pick either or, but in my case scenario, I chose to stay because I thought it would be more convenient for me to focus on school during this whole switch.

Corryn McPherson 01:05

So what would UB like during COVID, if you can define it in a couple of words?

Interviewee 01:11

It was very interesting because there was a major change in how everything was operating and what you were limited to, so it was pretty much trying to just find out what was going to be the pace for the next couple of months.

Corryn McPherson 01:28

Okay. And how do you think UB handled COVID in general? Do you think they handle it a little bit too late?

Interviewee 01:36

I feel that resuming school in terms of my case was one of the things that they went about wrong because considering that cases were rising and many students were focusing on their families back home, I feel like school wasn't a primary option for many. So by continuing to have students have to focus on school and take tests and stuff, kind of took away from everything.

Corryn McPherson 02:03

How did COVID affect your schooling at UB?

Interviewee 02:09

It affected my schooling because I had to switch to all virtually. So I'm so used to having my classes on campuses where I can tend to get the assistance needed. So the adjustment from standing on my screen all day was kind of hard on you.

Corryn McPherson 02:28

Do you think that UB took the proper precautions?

Interviewee 02:34

I think a little bit in terms of making sure those who stayed here feel like they had resources because they also gave out extra dining dollars and meal paying swipes for those in need and as well as given extra emergency funds that was enabled for students and refund checks and etc.

Corryn McPherson 02:57

What was your mental health like by staying on campus with all these resources? What was your mental health like?

Interviewee 03:04

It was pretty low because like I said, it was barely people over here, so it was like me and two, three other friends who got lonely at times, especially if you needed help with an assignment. So it was kind of like something that you had a lot of self time for yourself.

Corryn McPherson 03:22

Okay. And how was COVID back home for your family?

Interviewee 03:26

In terms of my family, COVID was decent, but around my hometown area, there was known to be like high cases of COVID over there. So many people around the area was affected.

Corryn McPherson 03:38

Did it affect any of your Guardians financially?

Interviewee 03:43

My mom actually had to step away from job for a couple of weeks as her and other employees like had to because she works in the medical field, but she was also benefited with checks from home and stuff due to the inconvenience. So financially it wasn't that bad, but trying to delay everything okay.

Corryn McPherson 04:05

And now that school is back in session, what is it like after almost recovering from COVID?

Interviewee 04:13

That's a big change because now that classes are in person, everybody is starting to get back into the groove of going to class, as well as teachers switching their teaching techniques into virtually

so physically. So I feel like they are doing a better job of lifting like the COVID mask and giving students the ability to get vaccinated or possibly still take a COVID test.

Corryn McPherson 04:43

When you say that school is almost back to how it used to be your freshman year.

Interviewee 04:50

Yeah, I feel like as of right now, it's kind of getting back into the group. There's no really no limitations on anything on campus or it's not mandatory to have your mask. But aside from enforcing boosters and vaccines, it's pretty much getting back to normal.

Corryn McPherson 05:08

What do you think UB could have done better?

Interviewee 05:13

I think UB could have done better giving students the option to either take the vaccine or continue to get in COVID tests. Due to many students having religious reasons, forcing students to have to choose between their own belief and academic was kind of not reducing them to do so. I feel like they could have gave those people a chance if they wanted to and allow them to be extra precautions such as going regularly to test for COVID and stuff.

Corryn McPherson 05:51

What do you think UB did well with it though? That's one of the positive things.

Interviewee 05:57

One thing I can say. Good. As I stated, they gave us resources on many things such as refund checks. Some classes allowed us to submit work late and gave us an extension due to the switch. And just in case anybody had technology issues or wasn't available at the time. So I feel like it was very considerate at times.

Corryn McPherson 06:23

Do you feel like UB was lenient?

Interviewee 06:28

For the most part because even though they gave us a lot of leeway, there were still guidelines and everything that we had to follow and that was kind of a tough thing to do.

Corryn McPherson 06:41

So overall, how do you view UB? Do you view it as in a negative light with COVID or positive light?

Interviewee 06:50

Aside from enforcing vaccinations, I feel as UB was positive due to ensuring everybody that they would be safe and they're safe.

Corryn McPherson 07:04

So it wasn't more viewed as negative. You view it more in a positive way. They did what they were supposed to. The only thing you disagree with is the vaccinations?

Interviewee 07:12

Yes. Correct.

Corryn McPherson 07:17

Okay, thanks.