

Transcript of Anonymous Oral History

Interviewer: Corryn McPherson

Interviewee: Anonymous

Date: May 11, 2022

Abstract: Corryn McPherson interviews an anonymous University at Buffalo student about his feelings about going to college during the COVID pandemic, how the university handled it, and if he felt his experience as a student was effected.

Corryn McPherson 00:00

Would you like to remain anonymous?

Interviewee 00:01

Yes.

Corryn McPherson 00:02

How old are you?

Interviewee 00:03

19.

Corryn McPherson 00:04

Which ethnicity?

Interviewee 00:06

African American

Corryn McPherson 00:07

And where do you go to school?

Interviewee 00:09

University at Buffalo.

Corryn McPherson 00:11

And how old were you when COVID started?

Interviewee 00:15

17? I believe. 17.

Corryn McPherson 00:19

And what year were you in?

Interviewee 00:22

Senior year. High school.

Corryn McPherson 00:24

Did you enter it- Did you enter UB [University at Buffalo] still in the freshman. So you were incoming freshman at UB?

Interviewee 00:29

Yes ma'am.

Corryn McPherson 00:31

What was it like with COVID at UB?

Interviewee 00:36

It was very hard because there's a lot of restrictions and rules. We couldn't go to people's rooms and stuff. Yeah and like we have to wear masks everywhere that, that's get annoying. Stuff like- We couldn't live the normal College life. And I heard, like the previous years, it was like everybody enjoyed college, so it was like a hard adjustment we had to make, but we did make the best of things. But I already feel like I wish to have actual college experience, which I didn't.

Corryn McPherson 01:07

What was it like learning at UB during the Pandemic?

Interviewee 01:13

I mean, the remote learning? It wasn't so bad because we didn't have to go to every class and we could just, ya know, be in our room, our dorms and just join the class on zoom. But I still prefer in person. I feel like I didn't do as I expected to do because mainly of the remote learning.

Corryn McPherson 01:33

Did you think UB accommodated for everyone during the pandemic?

Interviewee 01:38

No. Personally, I feel like they didn't.

Corryn McPherson 01:40

Why do you think that?

Interviewee 01:45

You mean like financially and all of that?

Corryn McPherson 01:47

like financially, academically and living?

Interviewee 01:49

No I don't think they did. I mean, they gave us a little funds here and there, but I felt like EOP-people had it more easier, ya know, than us. That's how I feel.

Corryn McPherson 02:00

Okay. And where were you in UB during the Pandemic.

Interviewee 02:09

Where I lived? [Corryn McPherson makes a positive vocal noise to indicate yes to this question.] Fargo [unknown word] Complex.

Corryn McPherson 02:10

So did you have the option to go home?

Interviewee 02:13

I mean yeah. Yeah, I could have stayed home and probably got like a refund check, but I chose to go to UB. I chose to be on campus during that year.

Corryn McPherson 02:22

So how was your mental health on campus?

Interviewee 02:26

As of now?

Corryn McPherson 02:38

When it was happening.

Interviewee 02:30

I mean I was going through it. I was going through it, so like, nah, not like going through it but I was like, I was like- I was like-

Corryn McPherson 02: 41

Struggling?

Interviewee 02:43

Nah. How do you say that? Like, I was puttin up with it like, I was puttin up with it.

Corryn McPherson 02:59

So what are a couple of things you wish UB wouldda did better?

Interviewee 03:05

Engage the students more, for us to meet each other more? They did a little bit, but I feel like it wasn't enough. They shouldn't allow us to play in the gym a little more, give them opportunity because they actually didn't. The gyms closed and stuff. Like it was really left with nothing to do.

Corryn McPherson 03:24

What do you think is one of the positive things that UB did during the Pandemic?

Interviewee 03:44

The only thing is them giving us money back cause of COVID. Like, the actual changes like- In terms of like, let's say you didn't do so well the first semester. They put that into consideration. So I feel like it was more lenient in terms of, you know, how they dealt with you academically.

Corryn McPherson 03:57

How did you feel about the vaccination mandate previously?

Interviewee 04:00

At first I didn't like I didn't agree with it, but we want to make sure people are safe from the COVID and the COVID is getting serious. So I guess that was the measures they had to go to. But at first I didn't really like it, but now it's like whatever. Everybody got it.

Corryn McPherson 04:15

So how did COVID affect your family back home while you were at school?

Interviewee 04:20

That my mom hasn't been working. I think it was a little before, I'm not sure. But things are hard because she had to get vaccinated and stuff and then she didn't like the fact that the school is forcing us to get vaccinated. I mean it affected us but like we- It didn't affect us like rock bottom. It didn't affect us that big.

Corryn McPherson 04:37

Did you get COVID?

Interviewee 04:39

Nah, nah, I don't think so. I don't remember getting the COVID.

Corryn McPherson 04:44

So comparing it to now and what it was like when you first started because you only came to UB as a freshman knowing COVID, do you think that it's a tremendous change? And if so, how? Like do you think it's different if it's getting back to normal but you never knew normal anyway.

Interviewee 05:00

To be honest, yeah. I still believe that this is not normal. I appreciate you could play ball now. We don't have to walk with masks to go to class, without masks, more in person classes. But I don't know. The way things been going. I don't feel it's the same.

Corryn McPherson 05:18

Okay. So do you view UB like in a more negative or positive light during the pandemic?

Interviewee 05:25

Can I say neutral?

Corryn McPherson 05:27

Why would you say- if you do say neutral you have to explain it.

Interviewee 05:28

Because there are some positive aspects of it like- They say the concerts with the artists, the ASA group things, fashion shows and performances at the SU Theater. I like that. Negative is just like in terms of activities for more people to engage and get to know each other so they can be better at that. That's about it.

Corryn McPherson 06:03

So what was it like- what was your mental state back then compared to now?

Interviewee 06:10

Back then it was more so like you get to know people. Build my network, networking up. Just like getting the field for college. The school now is just like make sure I'm on track for my major. You know get on, be on, on my studies. Like be on my studies in this overall just get through the years and semester.

Corryn McPherson 06:33

I forgot to ask, what was it like learning on Zoom? Did Buffalo make it easy? [Interviewee starts to interrupt, but Corryn continues] I did say that?

Interviewee 06:38

Yes. It was learning remote, that's what you asked me.

Corryn McPherson 06:43

And you said it was like what, okay?

Interviewee 06:44

Yeah, I said, I said it was easier. We don't have to go to class. But I feel like I didn't learn as much. Cause I was on my own.

Corryn McPherson 06:52

Like limited resources?

Interviewee 06:53

Yeah.

Corryn McPherson 06:54

So you view it in neutral light? You view the school in a neutral light overall?

Interviewee 07:00

Yes.