

## **Looking back at 2020 - A COVID 19 infested year**

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As a student in my last semester in Brooklyn college, I was looking forward to an easy semester with electives since I was done with all of my major classes. However, a downfall for me was that there was a very interesting internship which I wanted to proceed with but couldn't because the program was no longer available because of budget issues that were caused by the corona virus. This internship was going to provide me with an insight of what my career will look like but that never happened.

As an employee of the city of New York, I was still required to work in some form. For example, instead of coming to work physically we transformed our workplace to "zoom" meeting where our work would be done in 2-4 hours and we would still get paid for 8 hours. I saw this as an opportunity to take advantage of since I heard other employees who requested to still show up physically and were dropping like flies with the corona virus, one after another. However, mid-year, around June or July, employees were required to help out in other agencies such as the 311 center because of the increase of food shortages and other aid citizens needed. Eventually, in September we were allowed to go back to work physically – something I was looking forward to since I was more comfortable being where I knew the place and the people.

Mentally and physically, COVID 19 prevented me and many others from staying physically active which led to me gaining unhealthy weight. It was a nonstop binge of eating and just sitting down. Granted, there were opportunities to go out for a walk or work out in the park – but those were chances that I wasn't going to take because I knew I have a mother with underlying conditions which I had to do everything to prevent her from getting the virus. One thing that I did learn to do during these times is to cut and trim my own hair. Also, this was a perfect time for me to enhance my skills in freehand sketching since that's something I'm good at.

Nevertheless, COVID 19 was an experience like no other that everyone had to grow through, and we continue to just learn and grow from it.

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