

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Covid-19 pandemic, also known as the coronavirus, has changed my life in so many ways. At the end of December 2019, I told everyone that 2020 would be the best year of my life. My husband, who is also a SJSU senior, often talked about how we were both going to achieve our biggest dreams in 2020. At the beginning of January this year, my husband was notified to join the military training. It had been two years already since he had applied for the US Marine. When he got a call one morning saying his medical was finally clear, he decided to take a semester break and start a new military career.

After he went to the boot camp in San Diego for three months, I realized how dependent I was on him. I also moved in with my parents and started my internship at the hospital. I was just getting used to my new schedule and lifestyle, and I heard the coronavirus news. First, I thought it was not a dangerous virus that could transmit easily, so I completely ignored the news. I just stayed focused in school and continued applying for the master's program in Europe. My uncle and aunt, who live in Switzerland, bought the ticket to attend my graduation. My in-laws also made the appointment at the US Embassy to be here for both of our graduations. They were very excited to travel to America for the first time. My husband wrote me a letter every week mentioning how excited he was to see me in April on his graduation from the boot camp.

Then, coronavirus started spreading worldwide, and I heard about the first few cases in the United States. I got scared when the woman died due to coronavirus at El Camino hospital, where I was doing my internship. Few days after her death, my preceptor emailed me, saying that they are suspending the internship programs until further notice. California announced the state lockdown; SJSU started doing the online class. My in-laws' visa appointment was canceled, and the department of defense announced a travel ban for military service members and their families. We were told not to mention the travel ban and canceled graduation to the recruits who were still in training. When my husband kept writing me letters saying we only have a few weeks to meet, I was heartbroken. He eventually found out about the restrictions before his graduation.

I also did not know how to react when my college graduation got canceled. I am the first person to graduate in my family, and they were looking forward to attending the commencement ceremony. However, I told myself that as a public health student, I should always be prepared for such pandemics. I am also a wife of the US Marine; I have to be flexible for unpredictable changes in my life. A lot of people have lost their loved ones to this life-threatening illness. I am very thankful for having my parents to support me. My professors were understanding, and they were easy to reach out regarding anything. My husband has continued his training, but we still do not know when he can come home. 2020 has been a painful year for me, but It also taught me to love people around me, appreciate what I have in life, and be ready for what is yet to come.