

Spartans Speak on COVID-19

My name is Danielle and I am a senior at San Jose State University, graduating in May 2020. I have been greatly impacted by COVID-19 in many ways. Like many college students nationwide, I have been faced with the unexpected challenges of abruptly switching to online classes due to the coronavirus outbreak. Initially shifting to online learning, I felt overwhelmed but somewhat prepared for the change since I have taken online courses before. With online courses, my biggest challenge has been being able to stay focused and maintain self-discipline. Other challenges include technical issues, distractions, time management, staying motivated, understanding course expectations, lack of in-person interaction, and adapting to unfamiliar technology. Regardless of these challenges, it has been extremely helpful that given this unforeseen situation, all of my professors have all been attentive and understanding. As I approach the end of my undergraduate college experience, it is unfortunate that the graduation ceremony I have been waiting for has now been canceled. In regards to my job, I have been on a temporary lay off since mid-March and have been on unemployment since then. My fiancé and I also had to make the difficult decision to cancel our destination wedding in Mexico that was set for early June. With that said, the past nine weeks have been a whirlwind of emotions. I have had good days and full-on breakdown days. The best year filled with so many huge moments has quickly taken a turn for the worse.

Everything that's transpired since the postponement of our wedding has really put things into perspective for my fiancé and I. Shifting focus onto what really matters: our health and the health of our loved ones, friends, and the rest of the world as we all struggle through this unforeseen situation together. I am concerned about the economic and emotional impact this will

have on our nation and worldwide. I worry about the impact this pandemic will have on many families that have been highly affected and are suffering at different magnitudes such as the loss of loved ones, loss of jobs, and so on. With having to maintain social distancing for such a long period of time, there are many people whose physical and mental health will be impacted which will increase mental health issues.

As heartbreaking as it may be for us during this crazy time, my fiance and I truly have so much to be grateful for. We just have to keep reminding ourselves of our gratitudes, how beautiful our lives are and it will help us stay strong through all of this. All we can do is remain optimistic, despite this horrific illness.