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As a public health major, I felt as though I had an understanding of disease and pandemic. I understood the importance of preventive measures, and always thought that science should come first. Never in a million years did I think that I would live through a worldwide pandemic. The first time someone brought up coronavirus to me was the first week of January, and my coworkers were talking about how they thought it would come here. I thought everything was fake news, and had absolutely no idea what was to come. I laughed in their face and told them they were being paranoid when asked if I thought it would affect us. Come 9 months later, the world is living in a pause that has no foreseeable end.

Being a grocery store cashier during the pandemic was one of the scariest things that I have ever experienced. I work at the grocery warehouse Costco Wholesale, which had been on the news for weeks during the beginning of the pandemic for selling out of almost everything, and having lines out the door. Costco can hold hundreds of people at a time, and during the peak of panic shopping, every inch of the store was crowded. Walking through everyone before even using a mask gave me heart pounding anxiety, before a time when we knew how to protect ourselves. I felt as though my life was being put on the line, and that I was putting myself and my family at risk. Our management did not know how to respond to the pandemic, and our supervisors were so stressed that they did not show any appreciation to us. Customers were anxious about supplies running low, and would take it out on the workers. I was name called by multiple people, and disrespected more than I have ever been throughout all my work

experience. I was putting my health at risk only to be disrespected by the public whom were risk, and unappreciated by the company that was benefiting from us.

This time has brought so many different emotions, and brought up so many different fears. As a transfer student, I was only coming to San Jose State for two years, and the pandemic has completely taken away my college experience. I went to campus for only one semester in fall 2019, and now will graduate next semester online, never being able to go back to class again. I hope that there will be a normal once again, and that I could spend some part of my early twenties actually living my life. However for now, this feels like it will be our new normal for quite some time.