Tiffany Lam and Daniel Berry Interview

Tiffany Lam 0:00
Hi, my name is Tiffany.

Daniel Berry 0:02
My name is Dan, we both consent to be interviewed for the COVID-19 Archive Project.

Tiffany Lam 0:06
We both consent to be interviewed for the COVID-19 Archive Project. Today's date is September 16. And the time is 1pm. We will be taking turns asking each other questions before the pandemic started, and it was just a growing concern. what did you think of it? Were you worried?

Daniel Berry 0:17
Personally during that time, I was reading a little bit of scientific news. And when I heard about it, I didn't think much, I kind of connected it to Ebola and, and that it was a big deal. But it would probably be contained enough to not get too far out of its country of origin. A lot of people were comparing it to the flu, which I didn't really agree with during that time. But so many people talking about it like that must have got into my head at some point. People would joke around at school about maybe getting some time off, but I'm sure nobody thought it would last so long. As a little bit of time passed, and I heard how infectious it was, I did start to be a little worried. But I thought, hey, there's no shot it'll spread all the way here, right? Well, it turns out, I was pretty wrong, huh. I actually vividly remember talking about it to my family over dinner, as I would constantly bring up weird things I read about on the news. And my family laughed it off as most did, not realizing just how much of a weird time we were all in for. When schools said that they were going to close for a couple of days for lockdown, what were your thoughts? Did you think it was going to last months?

Tiffany Lam 1:09
Honestly, my first thought was, yay, no school. I was really excited to stay at home to relax because I used to be so busy. I had a ton of after school activities and a lot of homework. So I didn't really have time to myself. And I'm also not a morning person. So getting up for school was really exhausting every morning since I didn't get much sleep at night. So I was really looking forward to not having to wake up for school. First, I thought that the school was only going to be shut down for the initial two weeks, then it got pushed back to a month. And at that time, I kind of knew we weren't going back for the rest of the year. I thought that everything would go back to normal during my senior year. So I was shocked that the pandemic was still happening. But eventually I knew that it wasn't going to be over anytime soon. But I wasn't really complaining. I liked staying at home and doing school online. I liked working at my own pace and on my own time because I'm way more productive at night than during the daytime. And I also liked how the teachers recorded the lecture so that we could go back to them anytime we wanted to review the material. And un, unpopular opinion, but I really enjoyed online school because I had more time for myself and to do the things that I really wanted to do. I was a lot happier and less stressed out. So I think that I actually learned more from online school. What

measures did your school take both during lockdown and last year to try to work around COVID?

Daniel Berry 2:24
When lockdown first happened, my school was pretty blindsided, as most were. We didn't really have a platform to stream class on. So we just had a few assignments given by our teachers a week and that was, even though Zoom started towards the end of the year, I didn't use it for school, I mostly only used it for club meetings like student government. Later in the year, some of my AP classes started to use it for class. But the end of my junior year didn't really feel much like school. Mostly teachers didn't even know how to use it. Last year, however, during my senior years when they started to do actual Zoom based school where we had online classes specific times, I used to just wake up at noon and do my assignments for the week. But now I actually had to wake up early again. Then we switched to hybrid where half the grade would go in at a time and the others would be on Zoom that was nice seeing most my friends again. And then we transferred back to mostly everyone in class at a time wearing masks. I was in student council so I had an interesting time trying to plan events for my classes, as almost all the events my school would do yearly didn't work with anything because of COVID. One of the events that we planned was prom and that was definitely a headache as we had to do it outside with masks on. So that was a very interesting experience. How did your family react to the pandemic? Were you more calm, more worried than they were?

Tiffany Lam 3:35
My parents were really worried and COVID-cautious when the pandemic was first announced. And even now my mom is still just as worried but my dad doesn't worry as much. Before the pandemic we just brought things we bought inside from the grocery store and just left them in our kitchen. But now my mom wipes everything down with Lysol and even spray some things with bleach. Even things we bring outside like our phone chargers and air pods have to be wiped before they come back at the house. My family always sanitized their hands all the time when we touched something outside. So I was already used to that life before the pandemic seems like it was so long ago and just seeing my parents do all these things every time has automatically made me do it. I unconsciously find myself reaching for the Lysol wipes to wipe my stuff down before bringing it back inside. Personally, I wasn't really worried about the pandemic. I've never really been worried even now, because I've always felt okay, walking around outside and inside without a mask. But I always wore one because it was the policy. Because in California it was really strict on COVID restrictions. And of course in some situations like when I walked down a dirty street filled with homeless people, I don't feel safe and take extra precautions like double masking, because those people probably have COVID and I didn't want to get sick. Did you miss anything that was planned beforehand, like a vacation or trip?

Daniel Berry 4:49
Yes and No. in February 2020 I was able to go on a trip to Costa Rica that is kind of sponsored by my high school but not really long story short, they used to be a school company but left and now are only advertised by the school and run by some of the teachers there. I ended up going with some friends and my AP Chem teacher who was super friendly. And I remember them mentioning one odd thing on the bus to the airport. It was, alright when you were in the airport, don't make any jokes about weapons or having Coronavirus. And when they said that we all

laughed, and we're like, yeah, of course. But we all kind of realized that Corona was not one of those things that they look for at airports. And then and there, I kind of realized how big it was getting is during that time, it wasn't much of a big deal. Another interesting thing to note was that there were so many people in the airport wearing masks during that time, and it was before lockdown. So it was really odd for me to see as we hadn't really gotten used to the normalcy of that yet. We ended up going, having a great time, and coming back and then like two, like, two weeks later, lockdown started. So I'd say I got pretty lucky on that front. I also had a planned family trip with some cousins to the Grand Canyon, but my family ended up not going because we thought it wouldn't be that safe. Did you pick up any new hobbies during lockdown? How did you keep yourself busy?

Tiffany Lam 5:57
At first I just napped a lot to catch up on all the sleep I was missing. Then I bought a sewing machine and I started learning how to sew clothes. I spent all my time sewing because I thought that it was really cool that you could cut old things up and sew them back into something new and original. Eventually as I got better I opened up a small business and started selling the clothes that I was sewing. And even after the lockdown ended, I continued my business and I made at least $1000. I also watched a lot of TV. It was nice to catch up on all the shows I wanted to watch before but couldn't because I had no time. And I also watched a ton of shows on my bucket list and at one point I ran out of things to watch. After the lockdown ended I started practicing golf again at the local golf course. I usually played nine holes twice a week with my sister. It was nice to play again after like a year and a half. And I think I learned a lot during the lockdown