

Interviewee: Anonymous  
Interviewer: Angelica Gallegos  
Date: 11/19/2020  
Location of Interviewee: Española, New Mexico  
Location of Interviewer: Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Transcriber: Angelica Gallegos

**AG:** My name is Angelica Gallegos and I'm conducting an oral history for the archive five-eighty course at Arizona State University. This oral history focuses on essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interviewee wishes to remain anonymous. What is the date and time?

**ANON:** Thursday, November 19, at 4:40.

**AG:** Where are you located?

**ANON:** In Espanola, New Mexico.

**AG:** What are the primary things you do on a day to day basis, for example, your job and your extracurricular activities?

**ANON:** I'm in charge of pricing for a grocery store, I help take care of a household that I help take care of my elderly father.

**AG:** When you first learned about COVID-19, what were your thoughts about it? And have your thoughts changed since then?

**ANON:** My first thought was, where did it come from, and the wave of fear and death, and working in a grocery store dealing with all of the chaos. My thoughts have changed, because I see people being selfish and not taking responsibility for the virus. And those of us who are in the frontline of it, who are at high risk.

**AG:** How has COVID-19 affected you and your family's day to day activities?

**ANON:** Not being able to go out as much and spending time with family and friends. And just staying home and try not to be sad?

**AG:** How are you managing day to day activities in your household?

**ANON:** Our day to day activities are pretty much the same except for the online classes, then my boyfriend's daughter is taking and just staying home.

**AG:** What have been the biggest challenges that you have faced during the COVID-19 outbreak?

**ANON:** In trying to stay strong and keep positive, because when you have people at home, who don't go out, especially the kids, it feels like they get lost in the nothing that is happening from not going to school and interacting with the kids their age, and losing their social skills. Using the internet and video games to alter reality.

**AG:** Has the COVID-19 outbreak affected you, how you associate and communicate with friends and family and in what ways?

**ANON:** The COVID has affected our family because we are all separated. We talk on the phone and keep in-touch, but the kids are getting bigger, and we're missing out spending time with them.

**AG:** What have you, your family, and friends done for recreation dirt COVID-19?

**ANON:** We take drives, go fishing or take the four wheelers out for an adventure.

**AG:** Has your experience transformed how you think about your family, friends, and community in what ways?

**ANON:** I feel that everyone is dealing with code in their own way. Or we need to be respectful of their feeling down their fears.

**AG:** Has COVID-19 changed your relationship with family, friends, and community? In what ways?

**ANON:** think we need to associate and be around other people to visit and to be happy and to do activities on- as a community to learn and feel compassion and empathy for one another. With all this fear around us. It makes me sad that people will forget what being in a community and experiencing life is. And the school kids will not learn social skills.

**AG:** How has the COVID-19 outbreak affected your community? So that could include school, church, your job?

**ANON:** The people are taking the precautions to stay safe. But we're still going on with our lives the best we can following the rules of the governor.

**AG:** How are people around you responding to the COVID-19 pandemic?

**ANON:** I think a lot of friendships have changed because people don't follow the rules and the other half does. So, I've seen a lot of people distancing themselves and questioning the integrity of people.

**AG:** Have you seen the people around you change their opinions, day to day activities, or relationships in response to the pandemic?

**ANON:** Yeah, I think that, um, a lot of people are just kind of questioning their-, who they can be around and who they can't and some people not being serious about it.

**AG:** Self-isolation and flattening the curve has been two key ideas that have emerged during the pandemic. How have you, your family, friends, and community responded, to request to self-isolate and flatten the curve?

**ANON:** I personally cannot stay home because of my line of work. So, I take all the precautions of keeping myself and others safe. We try to do our part in staying home and distancing ourselves in situations that are not healthy for us in the community.

**AG:** Have you or anybody you know, gotten sick during the COVID-19. outbreak? What has been your experience in responding to the sickness?

**ANON:** I personally have not been sick. I have a friend who got the virus and worked a week sick. And it upsets me, upsets- upsets me that management did not send them home and insist on them getting a COVID test and they worked a week spreading the virus. Everyone's taking it into their own hands because they didn't- they didn't want to report it to the state.

**AG:** How do you feel the Governor of New Mexico has handled the COVID-19 pandemic?

**ANON:** I think the governor is doing the best she can under the circumstances. But I think that people are split half all the rules and the other half disregard the rules.

**AG:** What do you think about the governor's COVID-19 policies? What could have been done differently?

**ANON:** I don't necessarily think they should be done differently just followed by everybody.

**AG:** Do you think New Mexicans have been doing a good job at social distancing and following the governor's orders?

**ANON:** I think it's a 50/50 split. Everyone wears the mask for the most part, but a lot of people are not taking precautions and responsibility for the virus spreading. You hear stories every day about people getting sick and what they were doing. Families are still coming into the grocery store instead of just one or two people, people hiding their illness and spreading it. And then there are people doing the safety precautions.

**AG:** How do you think New Mexico can lower the number of cases and beat the pandemic?

**ANON:** New Mexico needs to understand that it's a life and death for some people. And it's not their right to take matters into their own hands and to take the chance of not quarantine themselves.

**AG:** Has COVID-19 affected your job, in what ways?

**ANON:** I think the main ways it's affected my job is the safety aspect of it. We are on high alert making sure people are safe and following the rules and they've stayed trying to stay safe ourselves.

**AG:** As an essential employee, do you feel safe at work?

**ANON:** Being on the front line, you're always going to worry. But you still need to run a business and keep on living your life. All of us at work have each other's back, so we protect one another the best we can. Nobody is safe. We just do our best to stay healthy.

**AG:** What precautions are you taking to stay safe while at work?

**ANON:** At work we follow all the precautions to protect ourselves in the community masks cleaning sanitizer and distancing.

**AG:** What precautions is your employer taking to keep their employees safe?

**ANON:** All of our protective equipment is provided from work and if we want to use our own stuff, we are responsible for it.

**AG:** Do you feel that more can be done to protect employees?

**ANON:** At my work, I think they're doing a good job. And I'm happy with everything that's going on over there, where I am at. Personally, I can't speak for everybody else. But.

**AG:** Is your place of employment providing hazard pay? Do you think they should?

**ANON:** At the beginning of COVID, we did get a few payments of the hazard pay, but we haven't gotten any since then.

**AG:** Are customers following the establishment's guidelines and rules?

**ANON:** For the most part, the customers follow their rules. If not, we asked them to leave.

**AG:** How are the customers reacting to these guidelines?

**ANON:** People in public are usually good with everything. And then there are people who think that they are entitled, who like to make a scene? Rules are rules. So, if you have to respect others, or you leave, it's not negotiable.

**AG:** What is the overall attitude at your place of employment regarding COVID-19?

**ANON:** I think at our store, we're doing well. Keeping safe and everybody is doing their part and everybody's looking after each other. So, I think that we're doing good.

**AG:** Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the employment of people, you know, in what ways?

**ANON:** I think that the COVID affected my, my older kids, employment, my son got laid off and my daughter hours got cut in half.

**AG:** What can you imagine your life being like in a year?

**ANON:** I see the future with more people being divided, instead of coming together. Even during this time of uncertainty, people are still selfish. They say one thing and act the opposite. I hope-

**AG:** What do you hope your life is like in a year?

**ANON:** In the year I hope my life will be happy living through this pandemic, with the help of hopefully people coming together to end the COVID and to realize that being with being and living with loving one another, we can all heal.

**AG:** Knowing what you know now, what do you think that individuals, community's or governments need to keep in mind for the future?

**ANON:** I think the government needs to remind us that we are all on the same team. We are in this tea battle together and not to divide people against each other, to do our part of looking after each other and to keep loving.

**AG:** That was your last question. Thank you.

**ANON:** Thank you.