

Transcript of Monologue with Alexis Hernandez

Date: 04/20/2021

Location : Granger, Indiana

Abstract: Alexis Hernandez is a senior at St. Marys College majoring in political science. In this monologue she discusses her initial reaction to the COVID 19 pandemic, her employment status and how it was affected, and the economical effects she has witnessed due to the pandemic. She also discusses her family and home dynamic and her siblings response to online learning. She touches on social issues like racism and politics effect on society. She describes how she felt when she contracted COVID and how she spread it to her family. This monologue ends with her last thoughts and hopes for the future.

Alexis Hernandez 00:01

Okay. So it is April 20 1138. My name is Alexis Hernandez. I'm a senior majoring in political science at St. Mary's College. Currently, right now I'm a full time student. And I work part time at a middle school where I'm a teacher's aide. Where do I live? I live in Granger, Indiana, and which is near my college. To small town will simple town, its Granger is known for being like the richer area. But I wouldn't say we're in the richer part. It's a predominantly white area, and it's mostly of middle class and upper middle class people. When it was the first to learn about COVID-19, what are your thoughts about it? How have your thoughts changed since then? So when I first heard that I wasn't scared, and I didn't think it would get to the United States. And then once it got bad, and having to go home and quarantine, which was about like, end of March. Yeah, end of March, middle of the march, middle of March. I was worried in the sense of everyday life and how it would affect me. And just like my post grad plans, because I was a junior at the time. And it was very selfish. Looking back. I wasn't thinking about anyone but myself. And but now, I wouldn't have thought that we would be where we are today. With the vaccine, basically, almost everyone really getting it. So that's been really nice and helpful. While our issues, but issues have concerned you about COVID-19 and Demick. So I think in regards of the effects afterwards, so like, what is it doing to people, I was scared that you know, how it would affect me and my family since we got it. And just not knowing there's still that sense of uncertainty, really. So that's what it feels like for employment, has COVID-19 affected your job, in what ways. So I was unemployed before COVID. And then during for the most of it, and I was privileged enough to be supported by my family and live with them. And then eventually, I found a part time job in January. And now I'm working and in school at the same time this semester. And now I'll have a job full time for the school year. And yeah, that's been really great. So has COVID-19 changed your employment status, in what ways? So really, it's helped me in that it's grounded me and to slow down my it slowed me down. Because I thought I was going to be living in a city after graduation or like worried about living somewhere else. But I think it's helped me appreciate the resources that I have. And to be taking it slow, since I don't need to be rushing into anything if I have the support system that I have, and to build a better savings as well. And I think with or without COVID this should have happened in the first place. So but having the excuse of COVID has been kind of nice, because I'm like, Oh, we don't worry about like looking for a job right now. No one can find a job. So what concerns do you have about the effects of COVID on your employment in the economy more broadly? I think that is very circumstantial. I know that in my bubble, everyone has been able to adjust and I'm

really grateful for that knowing people are doing okay, but I am fully aware that people in lower income situations or especially in minority groups are suffering the most during this and as if they weren't in the first place. It's just gotten to the point where it's we're fully aware of it and it's not great to hear about. Has COVID 19 pandemic affected the employment of people you know? Not really again, everyone has been doing pretty well. And but I'm way that there are people that are suffering. And again, it's just as I've been aware of people suffering, due to just financial reasons, it's obviously gotten worse. And COVID has changed things and heightened issues a lot more. So it doesn't feel great, you know, knowing about it, but I mean, it's boohoo for me, you know, it just, I'm doing fine. I just it sucks for everyone. And it just feels guilt, I feel guilty for everything being great in my condition. So family and household, how is COVID-19 affected you and your family day to day activities? it's been fine. My mom works from home most of the time. And my siblings decided to do online school for the year instead of doing hybrid. And that's mostly due to just I think they've gotten so used to being online. And also schools very different and not, it's a little bit more depressing for them to go there. Because there are so many rules, and you can't really talk to their friends. So might as well just do it online. And I commute from home to college. And that's been fine. I do work, I'm allowed to go on campus and work from there if I want to. But nothing has been very negative. My dad also he has his own separate area where he works. So he has been able to work this whole time, especially during COVID When it was bad. So yeah, it's been nothing's been negative in that sense. How are you managing day to day activities in your household? Again, we are fortunate enough to be doing well. We don't do anything different, really, other than I think for my siblings has been a little bit different with them doing sports, but I think everything's almost basically normal by now. Has COVID-19 outbreak affected how you associate and communicate with friends and family? And in what ways? Yes, COVID has been politicized. And we just have, you know, like one family member that we've all kind of disagreed with, but we kind of see that as normal family drama. So it'll be fine. Like, it's nothing that serious. We still have like our other family members we're close to, and everyone's basically vaccinated. So we're not that worried. And for my friends, I have cut off some friends. Because again, with COVID, being politicized, specifically with Trump, they went down the rabbit hole, and really are brainwashed by the Trump rhetoric. So that's been sad, but it like I, they feel like social experiments, and they lost our we're just a part of that batch that are doing well. And it's just sad to see them go that way, especially with family members, but it's not my responsibility anymore to help them. It's exhausting. And especially in regards to race as well, that's been a big one is just very, very, very exhausting, and not my problem. What have been the biggest challenges that you have faced during the COVID 19 outbreak? For sure racism being in a predominately white area, and it being also influenced by Christianity. There's just a lot to unpack. And whether that be with, you know, my white American friends or my white Hispanic friends, it's just a lot and some days I've just decided to lay in bed all day. So, yeah, that has been the big one. With religion and racism and politics and all that that has just been the one that's been heightened the most in my experience with COVID. Have you and your family and friends what have we done for recreation during the COVID-19? We don't really do much any like anything different other than spend more time on tick tock like we all kind of do that now. So like our time that we spend together is like us just sitting in the living room and scrolling on our phones, and that's not that different. So like at dinner sometimes we talk But it's like, nothing's really changed that much. For a community How is COVID 19 outbreak affected your community be prior? So I left the church that we used to go to a while ago, I quit going for a bit. And I always felt uncomfortable, but with COVID, Trump and racism, I'm glad I left when I did. I keep my group small normally, and we have like the same political and religious beliefs. But I feel like the communities that are most affected are in places of, like in Mishawaka, Elkhart and South Bend areas where there are minority groups, those are the ones that have been affected the most. But, yeah, being in the predominately white areas, everything's been fine. I've stayed out of the groups that I know will make me the most uncomfortable. And I'm pro very privileged for that. How are people around you

responding to the COVID 19 pandemic? So it's been, like barely changed, people have been going to people's houses. Business businesses were closed for a bit, but it doesn't feel like it. Because everything kind of opened up and went back to normal for the most part, other than making reservations and all that. But it feels pretty normal. I'm sure. There are like, businesses that did close, like smaller ones, but because we live in an area where everyone kind of just goes to the big chain restaurants or businesses or to the mall, it doesn't feel like it's been that different. Have you seen the people around you change their opinions, day to day activities, relationship in response? COVID? Yeah, just back to the what I experienced with, you know, political beliefs, but also, for college students, it seems like they're less concerned about getting COVID Being in a college town, especially when they're not with their family, because everyone else is doing it and knowing that they can't get COVID Like, give COVID to their family members, they're willing to get it. So yeah, that's been my observation with people. Self isolation and flattening the curve. have been two key ideas have been emerged during the pandemic, have you and your family and friends community responded to the request to self isolation? Okay, so I'm, I felt like it maybe lasted two to three months, mostly in like, once I hit April, and like May, it was times. But there were still people gathering at houses. And it was, whoo, everyone was limiting their times at like, places obviously only felt like you could go to the grocery store. But I feel like everything went back to normal pretty quick. And especially in the summertime with parties, people still did those. And it was a bit frustrating. But no, that's, again, doesn't feel like it changed. For as long as we've been out of like the whole isolation quarantine. We didn't really try flattening the curve for that long. That's what it feels like. So that's why I feel so normal, or everything has gone back to normal. Has COVID-19 changed your relationship with family, friends and community? In what ways? For intermediate family I feel like we've gotten closer. And same with my friends. I've made groups smaller, and it's been great. As for the community, I never felt like I fit in so I stayed away from it. So yeah, it hasn't changed by that much or that drastically, I would say, at least in a negative way. It's been pretty great. Mostly because I try to avoid things that make me uncomfortable or upset now. Which has been nice. For health have you or anybody you know, gotten sick during COVID-19 outbreak? What has been your experiences by the sickness? So I got COVID And then I gave it to my family. But I also feel like it was my dad that got COVID gave it to us because he had a headache and didn't realize it. And then he wasn't getting that segment everyone else was but so yeah, I, we all kind of got the same sickness, I think I was hit, and my mom was hit the most with aches and sleeping most of the day. It just felt like a bad cold. And we all didn't have our taste and smell for a week. But then that was about it. We were fortunate enough to not be hospitalized. Oh. Shoot So in what ways do you think COVID-19 is affecting people's mental or physical health? I'm definitely really, really, really affecting people's mental health, I can see it in my friends and family, mostly my friends, because we're the ones are most open about talking about it. And as for like students, I feel like both since working at the middle school and seeing in my siblings and myself, everyone is very unmotivated. And doesn't feel like they're learning every anything. And school is not fun, for the most part, or just like very task tasking. I don't know what I'm saying. But that's not been great. Um, but specifically for college students and a senior I've noticed with between me and my friends, everyone has been feeling very overwhelmed and not knowing what to do. Because we are made to think that we need to find a job immediately afterwards, or just not wanting to go back home or some people not even having a home to go back to. So trying to do school and figuring out what you're going to do with your life post grad is very stressful. And yeah, and I also feel like people have been more aware of their soul, their mental health. I know, for me, personally, I've been able to focus on it a little bit more. And it's been a lot. And same with my friends. We've all, for some reason, have been very, very aware of how our mental health is and what stated its it is. And right now, in the past couple, three months have been a lot, especially that we're coming to graduation soon. But yeah, and it's stressful too, because we don't know, it feels like there's no jobs hiring or you might have to just have a job that you don't want. But that's, I feel like that's pretty typical. I don't know, it's just been a lot in trying to figure

out your life at the moment for college seniors. So for information, what has been your primary source of news during the pandemic? I used NPR and CNN, or just Google things and look at quick, brief headlines on different news sources that aren't Fox basically. Or like. I mean, I feel like people know which news outlets are fake or going to be exaggerated. So yeah, and then I follow some, like, organizations on Instagram that are specifically geared towards human rights or activism. So, but I've been avoiding news for mental health reasons. Have your news sources changed during the course of pandemic? Nope, just limiting my intake. And that's about it. I try not to look up or read into news for too long, because it just makes me spiral and not really feel great. So yeah, the last one that was really bad was the Asian hate crimes, which are very relevant since the pandemic. And that was really not great to hear about. And it sucks because we still continue to hear about mass shootings in the case of three's a white person that goes and kills a group of minority people, or just mass shootings in general. And just hate crimes against minority groups and it's not been great. So what do you think are important issues that media that the media may is covering or not covering? I definitely think it's those things but it doesn't feel it feels oversaturated it, it feels like a lot and it's made. It's not delivered in a way where it's healthy. My soul feels like So yeah, that's that's it For government, how have ministers miscible leaders and government officials in your community responded to the outbreak? I am not a fan of my leaders, I get really upset thinking about it, other than keeping the state open. They were also just under fire for being involved for the insurgents, or the coop, or whatever that craziness was. And they were obviously a part of being a big influence on those people. And it was so frustrating to see them have some dumb apology, and then try to take a picture of them getting the vaccine as if that was going to save their brainwashed followers that they had a huge part in playing and and yeah, they are just like, genuine career politicians. It's just so frustrating to see. But yeah. Do you have any thoughts on local or state federal leaders? I think one of the big ones that I noticed was how the vaccine was not delivered to teachers right away, considering that schools and teachers were being pressured to have in person classes, which was really just terrible for anyone's safety. And I, since working there, I got the vaccine, when basically all the other teachers were able to get the vaccine, which was in late March. So and we didn't get our second dose till the beginning of April. So that was very frustrating to see, because we had to brown rely on pharmacies, maybe if you were to go there. But it just feels like they didn't deliver things in a quick, orderly fashion like they should have, which could have limited a lot more cases to. But now I guess, we all basically are getting it. So that's been nice. Oh, and a big one, I wrote this in my notes was that a lot of people who worked in factories or in other conditions were not really thought about in that were also at higher risk. They just were not thought about. And those were also the cases where people were dying. And it just, it's really frustrating. how things could have been prevented. But now we just can't have to look past that, which I feel like we shouldn't be doing but I don't know, it's a lot. And basically, I put the ad anyway, I say everything Trump has done, and the people, the pot. And the people that follow him and the politicians as well, that are just been subjects under his campaign. And they just feels like yeah, they've set us behind on so many levels to progress. So the future has your experience transformed how you think of your friends and family and community in what ways? I worry a lot. But I am grateful for how many things have been good. It just doesn't feel like I deserve it at times. And I want to stay helpful and see change. But sometimes it just doesn't feel worth it to think about. All I know is that my family and friends are doing great and they're healthy. And I just hope that it stays that way. Knowing what you know, what do you think that individuals communities or governments need to keep in mind for the future? That I don't know. That one was a difficult question to answer. I just know normally want to avoid a lot of the groups that we have here. It just feels like in general can like, specifically with our government it's been with the individualist or like profiting mentality in it. And I hate it. Nothing ever feels like it's, you know, for people or like everyone, but I think that's very difficult to do in general. So yeah, I don't know how to end this positively. It just feels exhausting talking about this stuff. Because on one hand, yes, I've been very fortunate. But I'm very aware of where things are. Or just like,

not everyone's going through the same thing as me. But I just hope that it gets better. That hopefully the these we just progress and just all areas. But yeah, I last thing is I only hope that it stays. Um, wait, no, that hopefully the effect of Trump doesn't linger or manifest into something worse. But looking at the news doesn't seem like that's happening anytime soon. And I'm just jinxing it. So I don't know. Hopefully, there's good things that happen. It's been good for me so far. And I've been able to privileged enough to dodge all the bad things, for the most part, but yeah,