

Transcript of Interview with Ana Suarez Aurora Torres

Interviewee: Ana Suarez

Interviewer: Aurora Torres

Date: 11/30/2021

Location (Interviewee): St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas

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Transcriber: Lily Crigler

Abstract: Aurora Torres interviews Ana Suarez about the impact that COVID-19 had on her personally. Ana discusses how her family struggled financially during the pandemic, and she shares her thoughts on how St. Mary's University handled the pandemic with their policies.

Aurora Torres 00:00

Hello, good evening. Today is November 30, 2021. It is 3:25 p.m. My name is Aurora Torres, and I will be interviewing the work study at the Raba building in St. Mary's. Hello Anna, can you please state your full name?

Ana Suarez 00:13

My name is Ana Suarez.

Aurora Torres 00:16

Hi Ana, tell me a little something about yourself. What is your major? Do you like working in the Raba building as a work study?

Ana Suarez 00:23

Well, I am a third year senior in undergrad in St. Mary's. My major is English communications. I am part of the pre law program. I do love working at the Raba building as the work study because it has given me the opportunity to do a lot of networking with the law professors. As I stated before, I am interested in going to law school, which is why I'm part of the pre law program. It has helped me gain experience in the work field as well. It has helped me just gain access and see a little bit of what the real world is like in getting a job.

Aurora Torres 01:01

So, Ana tell me how long have you been working as a work study?

Ana Suarez 01:06

I've been a work study at the Raba building for three years already.

Aurora Torres 01:09

Three years. So, maybe about a year ago the pandemic happened. Where were you when that happened, and how did it affect you?

Ana Suarez 01:19

Well, I was here on campus when the pandemic struck. I remember the first semester, the fall, it was ending. And we were here discussing how I was coming out in the news and how we just thought it was, you know, going to hit the United States. But of course, flash forward it did. We went on spring break and then well spring break, technically never ended because we went online and whatnot. But then the fall, which fall 2021, St. Mary's decided to bring students back to campus, and I was here; I was working remotely and in person at the Raba building as well with classes.

Aurora Torres 02:02

Okay, so going back a little bit. Um, you're saying that, you know, you had to go online. Did you have to go back home, and how did that work for you? Did you like doing online better or in class?

Ana Suarez 02:16

The second semester that it was forced to go online, because there were so much, the virus was spreading very fast. It was very hard for me to go online because it was my first year in college. So getting the grasp of, of how college works, and how every professor has a different system. In person, it was hard. And managing a whole new system within two weeks of going online was very hard as well. I personally did not like it. I am so happy that we are back. Not because I didn't like being at home, but because I just did not learn. I felt I, it wasn't the, the best way for me to learn and my classmates as well. It was very hard. The professor's also struggled a lot. It was just it was very a lot of miscommunication personally.

Aurora Torres 03:11

Also, did it affect your family in any way like, financially, you know, because you pay tuition here, like was it hard on you? Or, you know, how did that work out for you, especially that you were working here?

Ana Suarez 03:25

Yes, it did hit me very hard because obviously I wasn't working. So the school is not going to provide a check. And in my family, my dad is a small business owner. And I am I'm from the border; I'm, I live in a border town, it's called the Laredo, Texas. And when COVID struck, at the time, President Trump closed the borders with Mexico and with Canada. And that's the main source of my dad's financial gain. And my dad had to close down for about eight months, and we had no income sources coming in. Gladly both of my parents had some money saved, and they were able to organize and administer some money, but it was very hard. We had to reduce a lot of, you know, spending and certain stuff, you know, food was very limited. So, it was it was very hard. It was a very hard time for us.

Aurora Torres 04:27

Yes, I'm sure it was for a lot of people. Also, another question. And then coming back to school, knowing that you had to take the vaccine, how did you feel about that? If you don't mind me asking, did you take the vaccine or did you not, or do you take a weekly COVID test?

Ana Suarez 04:45

I was very happy when many pharmaceutical companies came with many vaccines because I felt it was a relief for the world just to know that there is hope for some of have us to feel safe going outside. I did personally take the vaccine, my parents took the vaccine as well. I know some people that didn't, and I know some people that did, but I did take the vaccine. I am actually already fully vaccinated, and I am scheduled to take the booster.

Aurora Torres 05:19

Okay, that's good to hear. And also, another thing also with the policies that we have here at St. Mary's University, how do you feel about that? You know, wearing the masks, you know, how...

Ana Suarez 05:30

I think the mask is very helpful, because it definitely does reduce a lot of spreading of germs and bacteria, even if you do not intend I know, many of us already feel pros on social distancing and whatnot. But the mask, I feel like it does help whether vaccinated or not, it does help, you know, not keep the spreading go on forward. It definitely does help. I do agree since, you know, we've been moving forward, it's been almost two years. So, I do agree with some of the policies and not making the mask mandatory outside just because you know, you are on the outside. But being inside the building with a great number of people I think is a good choice whether some people like it or not. It's, you know, it's a good it's a good habit to take, you know, you're eliminating the risk of spreading.

Aurora Torres 06:29

Yes, it is. One more question. If you don't mind me asking. With this still, ongoing pandemic, how do you feel about that? Do you think things will get back to normal or things will, you know, not go back to normal?

Ana Suarez 06:44

Not going normal, do you mean, on campus or in the world?

Aurora Torres 06:48

Um, on campus and in the world too.

Ana Suarez 06:51

I think maybe on campus, it will definitely slowly come back just because at the end of the day, the school is a business, and the school does rely on people coming to campus, you know, and it would be very sad to hear that a great school like this is gonna close down through financial reasons. And at the end of the day, money is what moves everything. You know, money is the reason we are here through scholarships and whatnot. In the world, personally, I don't think we're ever going to go back, there's actually a new variant coming out. And I feel like maybe one day we will but not in the near future for sure.

Aurora Torres 07:33

Okay, well, thank you so much, Ana for this interview.

Ana Suarez 07:36

Thank you for having me.

Aurora Torres 07:38

No problem. This ends the interview. Thank you very much.