

Transcript of Oral History with Nate Schank

Interviewer: Corryn McPherson

Interviewee: Nate Schank

Date: May 13, 2022

Location: Amherst, New York

Abstract: Corryn McPherson interviews Nate Schank about his experiences at University at Buffalo [UB] during the COVID pandemic, along with questions regarding Nate's family and personal experience.

Corryn McPherson 00:00

Would you like to remain anonymous?

Nate Schank 00:02

No.

Corryn McPherson 00:02

Can I have your first and last name?

Nate Schank 00:05

Nathan Schank.

Corryn McPherson 00:07

Male or female?

Nate Schank 00:08

Male.

Corryn McPherson 00:09

How old are you?

Nate Schank 00:10

20.

Corryn McPherson 00:11

What's your ethnicity?

Nate Schank 00:12

White.

Corryn McPherson 00:15

So how do you think COVID it affected you while you were in College?

Nate Schank 00:20

I think just from a learning perspective, going on Zoom was harder than most things, just because it was a different way of teaching and it was a different way in which that you need

to keep up with your work and stuff like that at home when you're not really used to working at home all that much on school work.

Corryn McPherson 00:40

Did Covid impact your grades negatively or positively?

Nate Schank 00:45

So the first semester was kind of negative. My grades dropped a little bit just because there's a lot of stuff going on. But in future semesters, the next two, my grades got back up to where they usually are just cause I got used to working at home.

Corryn McPherson 01:00

How did COVID affect your financial status? Were you working were you out of work?

Nate Schank 01:06

Yes. I lost my job because of COVID. So [Corryn speaks over to ask a question. Question is unintelligible.] No, I didn't.

Corryn McPherson 01:15

Oh okay, I'm sorry.

Nate Schank 01:17

It's alright. So that, that was hard, but I guess it wasn't that bad because you couldn't go out and do anything. So, ehh, so.

Corryn McPherson 01:26

How did it impact your mental health when you lost your job and you weren't doing that great?

Nate Schank 01:31

Yeah, it was a struggle there for a while just because we couldn't go outside, nothing to really do and just things weren't great. So, yeah, it was more stressful for sure.

Corryn McPherson 01:44

Okay, so how did COVID impact your family? Like was there any negative effects? Did your family-Like did you end up getting COVID? Like, how did that go?

Nate Schank 01:54

Yeah. So none of my family got COVID, which was lucky, but it was weird because we do have a close family, so not seeing each other was harder to do, but no one got sick, so we're lucky in that regard.

Corryn McPherson 02:12

Would you say that you and your family took proper precautions or you're more skeptical of it?

Nate Schank 02:18

Yeah, no, we took proper precautions because we just didn't want anybody to get sick.

Corryn McPherson 02:25

Even though this is like a little controversial, how did you feel about the vaccine mandate in order for students to come back to school? Did you feel like it was justifiable do you feel like it was unfair to certain students because of religious reasons?

Nate Schank 02:35

I thought it was justifiable just because it's a lot of kids in one room and you're kind of closed off so you don't want to have a spreading event and then have a lot of kids die because of that.

Corryn McPherson 02:46

Okay.

Nate Schank 02:46

But I do think that religious exemption should be taken into consideration because that has to do with somebody's culture, not really anything they can do about it.

Corryn McPherson 02:57

Do you think UB [University at Buffalo] did their best with the social- Like did you think UB took the proper precautions and was fair about a lot of things?

Nate Schank 03:04

Yeah, I thought so. I mean, the mask- the masking and having the vaccine made you feel comfortable and I thought they did a good job doing that.

Corryn McPherson 03:16

Okay. So in all, do you think it was- Do you view UB in a positive or negative light when it comes to COVID and how they handle things and conducted themselves?

Nate Schank 03:25

Yeah, I look at it as positive because I think spring of, 2021, a lot of campuses went back and then I had to go back to remote and kind of just stayed remote until vaccines could be more readily available. So I feel like they did a good job planning that out.

Corryn McPherson 03:40

And would you say things are back to normal?

Nate Schank 03:43

As much as they can be after a pandemic? I think so, yeah.

Corryn McPherson 03:46

And do you think that UB's prepared to handle it if it was to take place again?

Nate Schank 03:51

Yeah, definitely. I feel like everybody would make an easy transition back to online learning even though nobody really wants to. I think it would be easier the second time around if it needed to happen.

Corryn McPherson 04:01

Okay. Well, thank you.