

Transcript of Interview with Mackenzie Shay by Abigail Jurusik

Interviewee: Mackenzie Shay

Interviewer: Abigail Jurusik

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Location (Interviewee):

Location (Interviewer):

Transcriber: This transcript has been provided by Otter.ai with a 2nd pass for accuracy provided by Bryan Paintiff, HST580 intern, at ASU.

Abstract: In this interview, Mackenzie Shay talks about the initial pandemic shut down and how this has impacted her as a student. She describes how Eau Claire's small shops and businesses were being closed and how the community still tried to keep them alive by ordering online and using curbside pickup. Then Mackenzie talks about her first impressions of the virus, how she knew covid was a big deal because her mom was an English teacher in China at the time and would tell her how the students were staying at home, but she didn't fully realize it until it came to America. Mackenzie then talks about how she is going to university to be a teacher and this is her last semester but she is unable to do the student teacher portion due to covid restrictions. Then she discusses how covid and the stay at home initiative caused all schooling to be online and that she believes this will cause students to fall behind as she thinks that many are not absorbing the material, this is based on what she sees in her tutoring sessions. She then talks about her challenges with the pandemic, one being money, as her boyfriend had been laid off with his server job and she was not coaching anymore. So to stay in budget they stay at home and don't do much. Then she discusses how she keeps in touch with family via zoom, snapchat, and other social apps to stay up to date with family business.

Abigail Jurusik 00:02

Okay, and it looks like we're recording. So today is May 15 2020. So far there are 1.46 million cases of COVID 19 in the United States, where 255,000 people have recovered, and 87,218 have died. Our interviewee interviewee is currently in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and in Wisconsin, there are 11,275 cases of COVID-19 and 434 people have died. Okay, so it is 2:31pm. So what is your name?

Mackenzie Shay 00:48

Mackenzie Shay

Abigail Jurusik 00:49

All right, and do you mind sharing your demographic information for the study?

Mackenzie Shay 00:54

Yeah, of course. Um, so I am currently 22. I identify as a female. And I would be considered a white.

Abigail Jurusik 01:07

So what are the primary things that you do on a day to day basis, such as your job or in your or extra curricular activities and how have they been affected by COVID-19?

Mackenzie Shay 01:19

Yeah, I mean, the ones I'm doing at the moment, because COVID-19 are a lot different than what I had been doing prior to this. Before COVID-19 I, so I coach figure skating. And I'm also on the University of Wisconsin, oh players, synchronized skating team. I participate on the State Board of aspiring educators for Wisconsin, and I am currently attending University of Wisconsin Eau Claire to get my degree in education, along with another job that I do is I work at Sylvan Learning Center here in Eau Claire. And so a lot of that's had to shift. And a lot of things have changed these past couple months now, I guess, because of the COVID 19. So the skating rinks closed down. Within weeks of this starting within about a week, all the skating is closed down. So I'm not coaching right now. The Synchro season for the university had to be shut, basically shut down and cut short. Along with, we were supposed to be doing our final a show with the Eau Claire community. And they had to cancel that show. And that was really unfortunate for all of the seniors who get to do their senior show, usually. And also another week that I coach and Wisconsin had to cancel their show, too. And that was really unfortunate for all those skaters. So at the moment, I'm doing, I'm finishing up my classes online. But the hardest part about that is for me, I was supposed to be taking classes. A couple of different classes online, I'm supposed to having experience in the schools, doing observation, even leading classes for one of mine, I supposed to be teaching like a Spanish class. And it was like an after school type program class. And all of that had to be cancelled. We couldn't be in the schools doing any of that. So I'm missing all that experience now, which is really unfortunate. But I am fortunate enough to be have been working at Sylvan Learning Center. So I'm at least getting some experience still. Whereas most of my peers have none. Because I am still doing like virtual tutoring through Sylvan with some students are working with them. Since all students are online right now taking classes online, they're struggling with homework and getting that done. So I've been doing a lot of homework help, and just kind of helping students maintain their learning during this time. So my days have kind of become a lot like, I spend some days from 10am to 6:10pm tutoring. Because there's so many students that are needing that right now. And then I'll try and get my classwork and just kind of it's some of it, I feel like has almost been an additional busy work that's been added, because we have to do something since we're not able to be in the schools. Most of my professors have been really great about finding like really useful articles for us to read and respond to. So it's not most of mine is not too much busy work. But I know that sometimes some of the things we're on, they're like, Well, we have to come up with something to do. So here's this discussion to talk about. But thankfully, I have really good peers who make these discussions really useful. Whereas I know some classes aren't going as well just because they it's hard to do things online when [inaudible] be in person, but we're all making it work as best we can.

Abigail Jurusik 04:36

All right. Nice. Nice. So what's it currently like to live in Eau Claire, Wisconsin?

Mackenzie Shay 04:42

Um It is a nice area to be right now because there are at least a lot of parks and people can still get outside and go for walks. I have my boyfriend's been staying with me so the two of us are able to go out and go for walks but it's

really sad to not be able to like see friends because I have friends who are still here, but I can't really get together with them. I can't see them. I know that some people, I've seen some people out with friends, but I think it's mostly people that they're living with already. So it's Eau Claire hasn't gone as strict I feel like it's some areas I've seen. Some people have a lot more, like really strict precautions about going out places. We have a lot of our like craft stores in Wisconsin are closed, which is kind of a bummer. Like, I know, because I've seen, for example, like Joanne, I get their emails and stuff from Joanne fabrics. And I'd seen stuff like, oh, like curbside pickups available, but they're not actually doing that in Eau Claire. That was in like the Minnesota one. That's because that's where it's signed up for the emails. So we have some of our you know grocery stores and everything are still open. And there are a lot of people who you know see wearing masks and just like a new, a new normal, kind of and it's it's weird, but it's it is what it is. But it is unfortunate that a lot of places have closed down. Although what's today? Friday? So two days ago now on Wednesday, a bill was passed and are the bars have opened in Eau Claire. So a lot of the bars were really busy last night. I was seeing on, like pictures from people I didn't go out personally, because I don't know, I don't feel very safe doing that yet. But I do know that they are opening up again. And so people are just really excited to get back out.

Abigail Jurusik 06:37

Right, right. So when you first learned about COVID-19, what were your like, initial thoughts about it?

Mackenzie Shay 06:45

Um, I think it was just a lot of like, confusion and uncertainty, especially because everything it just kind of like happened all at once. Like all of a sudden, here's this disease and like, you know, I'd heard about it obviously, when it was in China, I was like, oh, no, like, that's unfortunate. That's a problem. And I knew that it was something we should be worried about. But it obviously hadn't gotten here yet. It didn't get here till what a month later, from like, when I think the original was found, something like that. I don't, honestly, I don't remember exactly anymore, because I feel like it's all just kind of melded together. But I was, you know, when I first heard about it, it was concerning. And my mom actually works as an English teacher for students in China. So I was able to kind of when it first came out, like I was seeing the impact of it because they were at home already her students were at home during the day. So she was kind of talking to me about how she had students at home all day. So she was doing different hours. So I knew that it was important, but I didn't really feel the impact of it till it came here. And once it basically hit United States and then Wisconsin, it was within like, I feel like a matter of hours, things were like shutting down. And every minute we were getting updates about changes and what was happening and this was closed, this was not closed yet. And then oh wait, now it is closed. And so it was just a whole lot of confusion and uncertainty. Those first like two weeks, I feel like it was just like, overwhelming. It was kind of a mixture. Like I remember feeling stressed and confused and just like numb because I didn't really know what was happening.

Abigail Jurusik 08:16

So how have your thoughts like changed since first learning about it?

Mackenzie Shay 08:21

Um, so I almost feel at this point, like it's been going on for so long, but I almost just become again, I'm gonna use this word like numb to it because it's a matter of like it's here and it's what's happening. But I kind of almost forget about like the severity of it. Because it's just it's been going on for so long now and I'm just like, this is just what

we're doing. And I'm like, oh wait, like when I go to the stores I'm like, there's actually like a pandemic going on and things are different right.

Abigail Jurusik 08:58

Oh, it looks like you've paused right, just give it a second All right. You're buffering a bit Okay, why don't you try saying something What was that? okay, Okay, okay. Yeah.

Mackenzie Shay 10:21

All right. Okay, so what was I saying now? Oh, my God, you're talking about how it's changed, correct? was that the question?

Abigail Jurusik 10:29

Yeah. Like how your thoughts have changed.

Mackenzie Shay 10:33

So, yeah, it's sometimes like I become unaware of the severity of it just because it's been going on for so long. And I feel like I'm my thoughts are changing all the time, I'm actually going to turn you really clicking in here. But there are something like I'm still reminded of how much of an issue this is, for example, like right across the street from me at the moment right now, which is why I've been on the other side of the house to begin with, is a food drive that they do every Friday here in Eau Claire to help people who are without jobs right now, because that is a really big issue. So I don't know if you can see that going on over there. But they have the feed my people food bank over there. So it's really nice that they're doing that in the community. And I know, there's a couple different days where they have that going on in different places around the community. But I feel like, I guess my thoughts in general, are that I forget, like I mentioned, I kind of forget the severity of it sometimes. But I also keep seeing things about how it is very severe. And I don't know, when this is going to change, and how I really, I don't know how we're going to be able to actually go back fully into, like, normal routines like they were before, until we come up with some sort of vaccine or way to stop this because I keep seeing more and more articles about how contagious this is as we're learning more about it, and how much of an issue it can be. And I think that sometimes, you know, sometimes I'm thinking, okay, maybe it's not as bad as they're saying, like, maybe we weren't actually all gonna die from it. But then I see things about how it is so really impacted people. So then I realized that it is still a problem. And I'm honestly wondering, at this point, now, if we're going to be able to go back to normal until there is a vaccine, which I've heard anywhere from September to April, and I'm most of what I'm hearing is that it won't be till like next April. So that's gonna be a whole year of this isolation. So.

Abigail Jurusik 12:32

So you've now you've shown us, the food bank across the street, that's helping people but how else how else has like your community risen up? with COVID-19, like, what are other things that are being done to help people?

Mackenzie Shay 12:49

in the community, there's a lot of like school districts who are trying to help and just make sure that the students are still having food and being able to eat. And there's been a lot of support in the community for like small businesses, and trying to keep them alive by doing a lot of like, be like pick up curbside pickup, for small businesses that are able to stay open. That's been a big thing, like a big I guess focus for the community has been trying keeps the small businesses in our community alive. And also lately, there's been a lot of focus on high

school seniors, because they're missing out on graduation. So I know that there's a lot of places around the community that are trying to come up with ways to honor these high school seniors. And that's the big one that I'm hearing about right now is a lot of like different news stations are trying to put together things for seniors and virtual commencements. And kind of just talking about ways that we can help the high school seniors, as well as the people in our community by just kind of keeping them safe with the different regulations that are still in place and being asked to wear masks at Target and the other stores. I heard that very recently Menards I believe it was and put it in a a regulation, I guess you could say, where people have to wear masks and as you're going into the stores, like they're taking people's temperatures, to try and see what's going on and try and keep people healthy. And I know, Sylvan we're going to try. We are going to be opening up in center again in June with I mean, limited people coming in, but it'll be that same thing. Every time students come in, like everybody has to wear masks and every time any like students, teachers, any of us come in, we'll be checking our temperatures as well to try and make sure that we're all staying as healthy as we can be.

Abigail Jurusik 14:38

Right, right. So how are the people around you responding to the COVID 19 pandemic?

Mackenzie Shay 14:47

That's a lot of it was a lot of confusion at first and just a lot of like worry, but it was kind of settled into routines. I feel like people are kind of in their routines and It is what it is. But people are getting antsy now. And it's been going on for so long that I see a lot of people being antsy. And more and more people starting to go out and seeing friends and getting together with other people again. And, you know, it's, I think for the most part, they're all staying, you know, limited in the number of people that they're getting together with. But there is some amount of people going out and going to see people again and going to visit other people because they're tired of being at home. So I am seeing that. Not from a lot of people, but I am seeing that from some people.

Abigail Jurusik 15:39

Yeah, so I noticed in your window that you have a rainbow and some hearts. Is that something that all, like else, like the community is doing during the outbreak?

Mackenzie Shay 15:50

Yeah, um, so the rainbow is actually for in Eau Claire, we had done some of the houses were trying to, like put rainbows in the window and be like a rainbow walk kind of so that way, like in kindergarten wants to hear like a rainbow hut and there's rainbows and all the windows that they can look for. And then the hearts are just for just kind of like the world of hearts. It's going on, like nationwide to just show support. And I've seen a lot of windows in Eau Claire, different houses, different businesses that all have the hearts of them as well.

Abigail Jurusik 16:18

Nice. Yeah, no, that's, that's really nice. So you've talked about how this has affected you a little bit as a student, but can you tell us a little bit more like what is your major and when are you planning on graduating?

Mackenzie Shay 16:30

Yep. So I'm, I have a double major in English education, Spanish education. So basically, the biggest impact of this for me has been so this is my I will be graduating in December, assuming everything is able to go to plan still. And for me, this semester, I'm in what's called our block semester, for teachers, which is the one either right

before you student teach or sometimes we'll do this one and then there'll be like a catch up semester for the other classes then student teaching. But for me, this is the one right before student teaching. So along with the rest of my cohort that's in my block with me, none of us are able to be in the school right now doing our in class placements. And this is something that's really challenging, because we haven't had some of us haven't had any in class room like experience in the classrooms, really, observations or helping since our freshman years, and most of us are seniors now. So it's been a long time. So this block is usually really important, because it's three hours every day, you get to go and observe a classroom. And just, you get the most experience, I feel like teaching like you need that hands on experience, you need to be able to be in the classroom, working with students seeing how other teachers are teaching, kind of feeling what styles would be working, like, like, class in the future. So I'm missing out on all of that right now. And going forward into the fall. I'm not a 100% sure what's gonna happen with student teaching. I was supposed to be getting placements earlier this week, at the beginning of semester, like a meeting had been setup for it would have been this Monday is when we would have all gotten our placements. Because they're trying to figure everything out, we haven't gotten those yet. I'm supposed to be getting an email any day here now with updates on what student teaching placements are going to be looking like and they will probably try to place us is what it sounds like with teachers. And then it's kind of up to the district and I guess the state at this point on whether schools are open and what we're going to be doing, because it is sounding like there's a very, very good chance that come fall, we will be back to still doing online school. I know that a lot of like professors at the university have already planned for that. For like their classes. So for me, as a student teacher, it's going to be I'm either going to be teaching online in the fall, which is a very different and interesting experience. And I'm hoping that at least by second quarter, I could have at least one of my experiences in the classroom, because if I don't have any in classroom experience that's very, very detrimental to my degree. [sneezes] Excuse me [sneezes] excuse me again, So I think that it's just really unfortunate and I'm really hoping that we're able to get in class because there's a possibility that if we aren't able to go into the schools and be having in person experiences that my graduation date might have to be pushed to the spring and I might have to take into like a gap semester. So that I have in person experience since we those of us that are in black right now aren't getting it right now. And if it is still online in the fall we will be an in person experience. So I could potentially affect my graduation date. There's no like definitive word on anything at the moment, which is also a little bit kind of annoying, I've kind of gotten over being stressed about it because nobody can control it and it is what it is. But it is annoying that I don't really know what's going to happen for sure in the future. So it'd be nice to have some information. But for now, we just kind of wait and see, I guess.

Abigail Jurusik 20:14

Right right, so how do you see COVID-19 impacting like teachers and like classrooms like, like afterwards?

Mackenzie Shay 20:24

Yeah. So something that I'm seeing right now is basically this whole entire fourth quarter, which is since. And I know at least in the Eau Claire district, the schools finished third quarter, and that was like, the last day that they were allowed to be in school happened to be the last day of third quarter. So this whole fourth quarter that's been online for students, which basically means that this whole fourth quarter, with the amount of students that I'm working with, it's really kind of going to be a wash, almost, I feel like they're not, they're not actually learning the material. Based on what I'm seeing, I'm worried that a lot of students are probably just going online to find answers, that they're, you know, they're just kind of filling out the worksheet, they're not really retaining the information, because due to unequal access to internet and resources, we can't be overloading students a lot of work. Or like, the teachers can't be I guess. So I'm noticing as I'm helping with the tutoring that I do, that a lot of

students just like, aren't understanding the material, they're not getting the material on, they're just trying to get the work done. So everything that was taught in this quarter, and if we're online in the fall, everything it's gonna be taught then is basically gonna have to be retaught when we go back to school, students are gonna fall so far behind, there's the there's the normal, like summer slump, where students kind of regress and like, and that happens every summer, when you're not in school students, you know, they they lose information, we, we all train only certain [inaudible]. But because it's so much longer, it's going to be twice as hard to go back. And everybody being used to being at home for so long, I don't want to go back student student behavior is going to be all over the chart, too. You have students right now who are some students really, school is their safe place, and they don't like being at home and they just don't have the support that they need at home. So for those students, it's really important to get back into the school. But for other students, it's going to be difficult to go back to school. And you know, they're at home right now where they can be doing whatever they want to be doing. And once they go back to school, they're gonna have to get back to the rules and the regulations and policies that school comes with. So it's gonna it's gonna be a challenge for everyone all around.

Abigail Jurusik 22:44

So how has COVID-19 affected you and your families, or at you and your boyfriend's day to day activities? You mentioned going on walks, but like, what else have you guys been doing over time?

Mackenzie Shay 22:54

Been watching a lot of movies. And just a lot of I mean, we both been trying to figure out so he's currently student teaching with the online student teaching. So it's just kind of a process of being able to get our work done at home, I'm getting the tutoring, he is grading and putting in assignments. So we kind of spend all day doing that and then, right now, honestly, by the time the evening rolls around, I'm just exhausted. Basically, you know, I should do my own schoolwork still, and I'm just kind of exhausted. And it's been kind of hard, because I haven't really had as much time. It's nice, like today's a beautiful day. So I'm hoping to be able to spend some time outside today and get outside and we can go for walks or we can go to the park, we have a lake right near our house here. Not too far away, or, and then some rivers around us Eau Claire's full of rivers. And so we have been doing sometimes we'll go during the day, we'll go out on nice days. And he'll go fishing and I'll bring my book and sit by the water with him and read my book while he's fishing. So that's been fun. But yeah, there was just kind of been a lot of movies. And we've honestly had a lot of additional work to be doing. when this first started. I was like, Oh, I'm gonna have so much time to catch up on like these projects I want to do and I can actually do puzzles and read all these books I've been wanting to read. That hasn't really happened at all. The first we had three weeks off from classes at the university. So I had some time then and as kids we're kind of getting the routine I know with my students that still haven't yet so I was doing a lot of puzzles and stuff then and was doing some projects that I've been having laying around that I've been wanting to do. But this past month and a half now it's just been basically I get up I go to work, he's doing his grading, I get back, I do my assignments, when maybe watch a movie or a show on Netflix.

Abigail Jurusik 24:50

So what would you say your biggest challenge is that you've had to face during COVID-19 or?

Mackenzie Shay 25:02

there's been a lot of uncertainty at first with like money because he was laid off from the job he was doing just because he was a server. So he didn't have that coming in. And my, you know, Job was shifting, I was like, you

know I lost my job coaching, I didn't have the income coming in from that from, from Silvan at first, I was like, I don't know, if we're actually able to open like what we're gonna do. So that was challenging, I am glad that I've been able to be working with that. So I do have some money coming in from that, though. So I think honestly, the biggest challenge has been trying to avoid feeling super depressed all the time, because we're stuck at home. And so it's been just kind of taking care of myself, making sure I'm still not just eating all the junk food, it's in the house when I get bored and sit and watch TV and eat food. So just kind of taking care of myself. And my, like, well being, that's probably been the biggest challenge that I feel like I've been facing. And just, you know, not being able to see my family and friends like that's, I'm a people person, I need people. And so that's probably been the hardest part for me right now is not being able to see people.

Abigail Jurusik 26:15

How have you been keeping in touch with your family and friends?

Mackenzie Shay 26:18

Um, I mean, I text on Snapchat, my friends, I do try to call my mom a couple times a week. But actually something that my family has been doing that's really fun, my mom's side of the family is we have we use like the Marco Polo app. I don't know if you've heard of that app. But it's like a fun little like video and basically, you kind of video record yourself talking do whatever, and then it stays on there. And you can go back and watch them later, kind of like a text. And they don't like disappear. So we have like a whole group chat with my mom's whole side of the family. So that's been really fun, just kind of give each other updates throughout the day. And I get to see my little cousins, I have a four year old and two year old little cousin, they're so cute. And so they're always fun to watch when their parents put them on there. So we've been trying to stay connected that way. We played on Mother's Day, we played like a virtual game night, via zoom, when my went on to zoom and my aunt shared like her screen and she had downloaded this like online game pack and then on each of our phones, were able to just like go to the website from where the game packs were and just kind of like type in the code and get to play games with each other and then it would pop up on the screen, like the updates of the scores and everything. So it was kind of fun too just keep in touch. There's been a lot more. Yeah, definitely a lot more use of technology, obviously, to keep in touch. And I feel like I've been doing a lot more zoom calls with people and just trying to stay in touch as best I can.

Abigail Jurusik 27:35

Okay, great. So, a little bit more of a downer topic. Have you or anybody you know, gotten sick during the COVID 19 outbreak?

Mackenzie Shay 27:47

Not specifically with COVID no. I know some people have been my brother was tested at one point, but he didn't have it was just some other random virus somebody happened to pick up somewhere. So that was a little bit scary when we didn't really know what was going on with that, because he was presenting basically the same symptoms as COVID. But he was tested and it came back negative. And so it was just some other little virus. And it went away a day or two after that. So and I know that my my other brother, it wasn't COVID again, but he had really bad like tonsillitis. And that was really hard, because he wasn't able, this was like at the beginning of all this. So he wasn't able to go into the doctor's office to get the prescriptions he needed. So he was doing like the Doctor On Demand, I think, which is when I was like online doctors basically where you do like a video call like this with a doctor. And they were able to look to sort and be like, yeah, you need something. But it took a while for him to

get better because it couldn't actually go in and get tested and like see what kind of medication you needed. So it's just been like, everything has changed, and everything is so different.

Abigail Jurusik 28:54

Okay, so yeah, and those two situations you like there was worry both with your first brother worried that maybe he had it, and then the second, he wasn't able to get the medical attention he needed right away. So in what ways do you think that COVID-19 is affecting people's mental or physical health?

Mackenzie Shay 29:13

So many, so many ways. I mean, that's been the hardest for me and I know a lot of people like it just being stuck inside. It's hard to not be around people and it's depressing. And I've talked to a couple people who, you know, and myself included, like, I feel like my mood really depends on the weather right now. If it's nice and I can get outside, mentally I feel a lot better. And also physically because I'm being active. Otherwise, if it's gross, I'm just kind of like I don't want to do anything. I'm just gonna sit on a couch all day. Because what else like what why not. So, I have I feel like there's a lot of depression that's happening right now and, especially people who are already diagnosed with depression, I feel like it's probably gotten a lot worse. Because you don't have necessarily motivators to get you up and get you moving and I know that for me, that's something that's helped in the past when I have felt more depressed and so it's, it's, I think it's a really big impact on people's mental health. Because we really need just make sure that we're doing as much self care as we possibly can. And like physical health, I know, there's the whole, like, COVID 15, for like, a lot of us are sitting at home, we're not getting out and being as active as we would like to be, because we're you have to stay at home. We're kind of just eating, stress eating probably for a lot of us, I know I am, at least, I can't talk for everybody. But I know that I tend to stress it. And so I've been doing a lot more of that. And I'm trying to stay active and get outside when I can, and no, for walks, like I mentioned, but I think that we're all gonna have a lot of recovering to do after this proposal seem like and sick is we're gonna have to recover mentally, and physically as well.

Abigail Jurusik 31:13

Right. So even, like, hopefully, when we can get like, a vaccine, or, you know, for this, you think there's gonna be like, it's, that's not going to be the end of the impact of COVID. No. So what have been your primary sources of news during the pandemic?

Mackenzie Shay 31:35

Um, honestly, like, I'll see a lot of times on my phone like the like Apple news, like from the, because I have an iPhone. So like, in the morning, the Apple news will pop up with like CNN, or ABC, or just like the different news sources. And so that's where I've been like, I don't watch the news on TV. I don't get the newspaper. I haven't seen one, I don't know. I don't know unless it was on one of those was. So basically, it's my phone, and I will get articles on my phone. And I was like, I'll see a lot of articles on Facebook that people like repost from different news sources, so I'll look at those ones too. But probably like with all of this, my biggest source of news has been through my Apple, Apple news, or whatever that is on your phone that kind of like pops up notifications of news stories as they come out.

Abigail Jurusik 32:25

Right. So would you say that how much you've been checking the news has changed with the pandemic?

Mackenzie Shay 32:30

Yeah, I think that at first, I was checking it all the time. Lately, I've kind of stopped because there hasn't been as many changes. Like we just on Wednesday, there's the bill, those pass that I heard about from somebody else. And I honestly haven't even gone to look at it yet. Because I'm like, okay, like, until I actually can see things changing. What am I going to do? ya know? But at first, I was definitely checking it like, constantly. What's closing? What's the state? Oh, wait, is this? How long are we closed? And honestly I'm like, when things open? I'm sure I will.

Abigail Jurusik 33:03

So what do you think are important issues that the media may not be covering?

Mackenzie Shay 33:09

I think that it's important for the media to be covering kind of as best they can what's I feel like there's a lot of like, talk about how bad is the virus really? Is it really helping? Or like, is it really like, as bad as people are saying, is it not? Some people are saying oh, it's all a lie. Just kind of keeping up to date with, with what is happening and any progress or declines that are happening, which I feel like they're doing a pretty decent job at but I feel like we could get more updates on that. Especially like in our communities, it's important to know, kind of what's happening in our community and I feel like I haven't, at first, I was seeing a lot of updates, like, regularly with the cases in the eau Claire County. And I haven't seen that as much lately. It could just be again, that I'm not as focused on it, though, anymore. But I think that it was also nice, like the positive news sources are good too, because we do need some positivity. So having any basically positive stories, good stories that can be shared are important too.

Abigail Jurusik 34:24

Right? So how have municipal leaders and government officials in your community responded to the outbreak?

Mackenzie Shay 34:31

Yeah. Um, so I know that there's been a lot with the leaders. I mean, they're constantly in communication, talking about how, what needs to happen moving forward, when we can reopen things. Is it safe to reopen one of the policies of that? and I know like, firsthand because I am on the State Board of aspiring educators. I've been able to kind of touch base with some of the Wisconsin Board of Education and just kind of get some updates on that and there's been conversations about When is it safe for students to go back? What is the process like policies have to be in place? And there's just discussions constantly still about what we can be doing for students what like, what teachers are needed, what communities are needing. So I think that there's just they're doing, I feel like it's not, we don't want to see that there's a lot happening. But I feel like behind the scenes, there's a lot that they are doing constantly to figure out what they need to be doing to keep everybody safe.

Abigail Jurusik 35:32

Do you have any thoughts on how local state or federal leaders are responding to the crisis differently?

Mackenzie Shay 35:39

Um, I think it's interesting, because like, I know that there's a lot of difference between Minnesota and Wisconsin with our dates. And I'm like, we are so close. I don't Yeah, I sometimes I'm like, Okay, why, like Minnesota was opening up before we were. And some of their regulations there are more strict than ours, some are looser than

ours. And I'm like, Why, like, I just I don't being as close to Minnesota as we are. We're only an hour away from the border here. I feel like, especially if you get to like somewhere like Hudson that's right on the border. I guess I'm just kind of confused why there's so like, every state is so different, I get that like some states that have a lot more population, like New York, obviously, is going to have to have their own regulations. But I feel like a lot of the ones that are nearby to like in the Midwest here should have similar regulations going on. But so that's just a little bit confusing with all the different dates, but I know that we are kind of generally following the trends of each other, so.

Abigail Jurusik 36:39

okay, all right. Now looking towards the future, has your experiences transformed how you think about your family, friends and community, and if so, in what ways?

Mackenzie Shay 36:51

I think that it's just important to make sure that I'm making time for them. Because I'm a really, really busy person, I stay busy all the time. And this has kind of taught me to make time for my family, friends, but also to make time for myself. I kind of tend to neglect my self care, and I overwork myself. And I don't ever take time for myself, like, you know, I'm the kind of person who is doing stuff, constantly, I'm running from one thing to the next. And I'm trying to juggle 10 different things at once. And that's not being sarcastic. I had been working six jobs at one point this year, and going to school and being involved in multiple different clubs. So I'm used to juggling a lot. So this has kind of taught me to, that it's okay to say no, and that it's okay to not be doing something at every second of everyday, which is then let me be able to have more time to stay in touch with my friends and family and talk to them more. And I'm really looking forward to being able to, like get together with friends and just have time to spend time with friends. Rather than running from one thing to the next all the time.

Abigail Jurusik 38:11

So had some self reflection, then,

Mackenzie Shay 38:14

yeah,

Abigail Jurusik 38:14

during all this,

Mackenzie Shay 38:15

that's forced me to slow down, which was something I think I was almost afraid to do. And that's been really good.

Abigail Jurusik 38:23

Alright, so knowing what you know, now, what do you think that individuals communities, or governments or even schools need to keep in mind for the future?

Mackenzie Shay 38:32

I think that it's just important to make sure that we're always doing proper, you know, like, washing hands and keeping things clean. Because we never know when, hopefully, we won't have another pandemic like this, that

happens, but germs are everywhere all the time. So I think that a lot of things are going I think that there are going to be changes to the I, I don't know, I almost I wonder if we're going to be able to go back to normal the way it was. Part of me is like, I feel like people are saying like, once this is done, Okay, done. Moving on. We're moving on, like the end. But other parts of me thinking that once this is over, we're going to continue to hopefully maintain these like best practices of the washing things and cleaning things and keeping ourselves healthy.

Abigail Jurusik 39:29

Yeah, how do you think this is going to affect schools after this? Like, do you think it's going to affect class sizes? Or like when you think of like a, like elementary school kids? You know, there's 30 in a room,

Mackenzie Shay 39:40

yeah.

Abigail Jurusik 39:40

Like each other? Like, how do you think this is going to impact it afterwards?

Mackenzie Shay 39:44

I mean, I don't know. I go back and forth. Like that's part of why I think it's going to be hard for schools to open up for a while until we have a vaccine for this because we can't be putting that many kids at close together. When they're coming from all over the cities and everything. But I don't know, if it's feasible to make class sizes that much smaller, it would be ideal to make class sizes smaller, but I don't know if schools are gonna be able to afford that. So I think it's just going to ya know teachers are just gonna have to just be really good about making sure that before like snack for elementary school, students are really washing their hands and actually washing their hands and wiping down tables every night and wiping down desks. And like at the secondary level between classes, we'll probably have to wipe down desks for a while. And that'll be interesting, because, you know, I remember when I was in high school, I was, I was kind of a germaphobe myself. So I was always like, how many people have been sitting in his desk? You know, there's so many different classes every day. And when was the last time these were cleaned? You know, ideally, maybe they'd be cleaned once a week. But how often does that actually happen? You know, I feel like [inaudible] so I think that it's going to just be like, a practice that teachers will have to show that they are getting desks like down, or maybe students will even like help wipe down desks have at the end of class over the last two minutes, we're going to spread out all the desks and wipe them down.

Abigail Jurusik 41:10

Right, so maybe just like foundational changes, some things just may not be feasible to change our entire system right now, is that kind of what you're saying?

Mackenzie Shay 41:20

Yeah, I mean, there are things that could happen. We could reduce class sizes that would maybe help, but I just I don't think it's feasible.

Abigail Jurusik 41:28

Like as things are now, like that would have to be like a larger chain.

Mackenzie Shay 41:34

Yeah.

Abigail Jurusik 41:36

All right. Well, thank you so much for your time, Mackenzie. I had a really great time interviewing you for this project.

Mackenzie Shay 41:44

You're welcome.