

Transcript of Oral History Monologue by Elizabeth Gomez

Interviewee: Elizabeth Gomez

Interviewer: Self

Date: 05/28/2020

Location: Altadena, California

Abstract: In this monologue, Elizabeth Gomez shares how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected her school and personal life as well as her day to day activities. She also discusses her thoughts on how the American government and media has covered the pandemic.

Elizabeth Gomez 0:00

Hi, my name is Elizabeth Gomez, and it is currently Thursday of May 28, 2020, and it is 11:06am. Some things that I used to do before quarantine started would include going to school, I go to high- go to PHS High School. I would also go Tuesdays and Thursdays to an after school college course. And that's pretty much it. But since this quarantine started, I'd have to take those courses here at home and do my schoolwork at home. I've also had to babysit my nephew here at home, which is a little challenging. Living here in Altadena, California, I'd say that it's an OK area. I live in a little community right across from a church, and there's some stores around us. And it's pretty quiet. I mean, there's some noise but not that much. But when this pandemic first started, my first thoughts were, it was a joke, like it was just like any other cold, and it was being overhyped about. Um, they began to say that they were going to shut down schools, which I didn't believe because I just didn't believe. I thought it would like, we'd never end up at the point that we are now stuck at home and quarantine. But me and my friends would joke around about it actually coming close to us and having to go as far as closing our school. So the day that it did happen, like it didn't feel realistic to me. I don't think it felt realistic to anybody, because this has never happened to us. So when it actually began to happen, obviously, my thoughts did change. And it snapped to me that, you know, this is actually happening this, this is real, and you need to be careful, because you never know, and you can't really tell who actually has it. The thing that's most concerning about this pandemic is since my parents are still working, it's a little concerning that, you know, they might get contaminated with this pandemic. What's especially concerning to me is that my dad is- or was a smoker. So the pandemic does affect the lungs. So that's kind of scary to think about. And also, it's a little scary because my nephew also has heart problems. So we have to try really hard to keep ourselves contained and healthy for as long as we can to avoid getting struck by this pandemic. Besides that, the pandemic hasn't really affected my parents' day to day activity, they still go to work, although it is a little different. And my sister also still goes to work, but she now has, on Monday and Tuesday, she has half day, so that's that. But we're still managing our day to day activities, although they are a little more complicated to handle and we have to be a little more cautious, we still find a way to get things to work out. And now associating with people is a little different, you know, now we have to keep our distance and wear our masks. I've also noticed that when we go out, which is rarely for me because I'm mostly quarantined at home, the stores now have little X's on how how far apart you should stand from the other person to avoid any people that may actually have the COVID-19. But besides that, what I would say is the biggest challenge that I have faced during this outbreak is managing schoolwork and trying to babysit at the same time, which is kind of hard because he is five years old and he has lots of energy. And sometimes I can't provide the attention that he needs because I'm doing schoolwork. But me and my family have been finding ways to spend more time

together which is really good because before we were so busy with work in school that we never really had time for each other. Only during like the weekends we'd have time for each other but that still wasn't enough. So now that we are stuck at home together, we've been doing campfires outside and just having family time, every night now we are watching a show. We've been watching The Good Doctor, and just like bonding with each other and just having more family time. As for friends, I'm FaceTiming them. And we're trying- we like help each other with homework. We've also been playing like multiplayer games where we could play with each other. Like, we've been playing Roblox a lot recently, and Call of Duty. And, you know, it's just those things that help us have fun with each other now that we can't really see each other face to face. The COVID-19 has also affected my church. Now, we are not allowed to go to church on Sundays. So we like find ways to still attend services, like by listening to the radio, sometimes they'll have services. Obviously it has affected our schools, you know, now we can't go to school. Now everything is online. And it's different, it's a little harder now that we're not provided with face to face help with our teachers. But it just took some getting used to. Not only has it affected school, but I was taking college course classes after school. So I'd also have to be working on that after I finish all my schoolwork. But besides that, people around me have been responding to this pandemic very positive- positively. Some of our neighbors have even set up little food banks for people if they're in need, and others have even made masks to hand out for free, which is really good. And across the street, my neighbor has been- he has kid- a kid that has a band, and they've been doing concerts outside for people to enjoy. And I've also contributed by making posters and setting them outside to let people know that if you need help, you know we're here. Self-isolation for my family has been okay. It was a little hard for us not to have family around during Mother's Day, since we always have little get together with family. Um, as for people in my community, some are still staying self-isolated, while others are not really, which that is their option. But it would be best if they would stay inside. COVID-19 has been taking a positive turn on me and my family where our bonds are getting a lot stronger. We've been spending lots of more time together, which is good since we were never really around that much each other. So I really liked that part of being self-isolated with family members. During this outbreak, none of us have really gotten sick. Although it was allergy season for us, we have been getting allergies, which was kind of scary, because the first thing that comes to mind when you're feeling sick is oh no, I might be contaminated with the COVID-19. But we are slowly getting less paranoid, now that we realize that it's just allergies. But it's still kind of scary to think that you have it. The COVID-19, I think, has been really affecting some people's mental and physical health, mental because we're all in the mindset that if we get contaminated, we're gonna die, because that's all we see on the news is death rates. And we're not really getting that much- not that many answers, if there's a cure or a vaccine that would help us but, as for physical health, I think it's taken a positive turn on some of us. I've seen many starting to exercise and change their diets now that we have lots of time. So that's a positive side. I am one who has been starting to exercise since I have lots of free time. But my primary sources for news during this pandemic has been the TV. I've been watching lots of ABC News, and they've been keeping us updated and also providing some positive sides of this pandemic. But besides that, one thing media isn't really covering is what they're doing with the dead bodies, like, where do they go? Do they not take into consideration that that's somebody's loved one, and they don't know exactly what they're doing to them. But government officials like Donald Trump have been saying negative stuff, like he's been calling the COVID-19, the Chinese virus, was- which has let other government officials call it other names like the Wuhan virus, or the kung flu virus, which I

think is not very respectful since although some may think that, you know, it did originate from China, okay, but they shouldn't be making those types of remarks, causing other people to be racist towards Asians. Besides that, the COVID-19 has really transformed the way I think about my friends and family and people in the community. It has really opened my eyes to become more aware that you need to be careful that things can happen in just a second, and everything could be gone. So it has really helped me get closer to my family and realize the time that we have together is very precious, and that I need to take into consideration that they might not be here forever. And anything could happen. In the future, we need to keep in mind that although this is a pandemic, it doesn't mean go crazy and take all the supplies from the stores, like toilet paper was really hard to find. And food you know, we still have the necessities we need but we do not need to go that crazy in buying more than what we need. We need to keep in mind that there's other people that need the supplies too, and take into consideration that we aren't the only ones who are struggling through this, and we need to share the supplies that we do have.