

Oral History Questions for Arielle:

Melena: My name is Melena and today's date is March 9th 2021. Today we will discuss the experiences of people during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are in San Antonio Texas and I am interviewing...

Arielle: Arielle Benjamin

Melena: Alright, so let's get started! May I ask how old you are and when is your birthday?

Arielle: I am 22 years old and I was born in the year 1998

Melena: And where are you from?

Arielle: I am a military brat so I don't consider myself from anywhere.

Melena: *laughs a little* When and how did you first hear about the virus.

Arielle: I heard about it at my job through my co-workers in 2020 a week before spring break.

Melena: Can you explain how the virus has affected you or your family and friends?

Arielle: It has affected me in a sense that I don't have to make an excuse anymore to stay at home. It's definitely helping with that. *Melena chuckles* But regarding my family, it has hindered them more because of their jobs and not being able to go to work as freely as they wanted to ... um but for me personally, it's not much of a difference.

Melena: Mhm, yes so your daily or weekly routine isn't, isn't any different from like shopping for groceries, or spending time with family?

Arielle: Umm not necessarily. I still spend that time with my family whenever I feel the need. Umm and then, regarding shopping, I just order delivery instead at this point.

Melena: *chuckles a little more* Yes, are you working at the moment?

Arielle: I am.

Melena: What do you do at this job?

Arielle: I am a student worker at the Office of Military Affairs at Texas A&M San Antonio. And I assist students with using their military benefits for their schooling.

Melena: Awesome! And due to the pandemic, are you able to work from home?

Arielle: I am, however I choose not to.

Melena: And why is that?

Arielle: It is a lot more difficult to work from home with my job because of the fact we work with uh files and I can't take those files with me so it makes working from home difficult.

Melena: *agreeing sound* Yeah, that makes sense. How has adapting to the virus affected your school or work responsibilities?

Arielle: Uh regarding school, since it's mainly all online at this point, umm, the assignments are still due, same dates, everything like that it's just less interaction in person with the profesor. Which I can see, uh could be difficult for others however its not that bad for me I'm kind of used to that. Um regarding work, it has completely stopped all of my one to one interactions with students, however, since we still have the availability of speaking to them through the phone , or emailing them um we still have that contact that can keep us with them.

Melena: *softly* yeah. *normal voice* So do you know anyone that has been affected with the virus?

Arielle: I have personally been affected with the virus.

Melena: And what was your experience with having the virus?

Arielle: It was not too bad, I was overall asymptomatic but I did just have a stuffy nose for about a week and half. Uhh the only difference was that I did get to stay inside for 2 weeks and watched as much tv as I wanted too.

Melena: Oh awesome yeah. So when you were hit with the February Winter Storm did you think about the virus?

Arielle: I did I hoped that it would decline um during that time period however it did make sense that there was really no chance because the fact that people now had to go to the stores for emergency supplies, groceries, all that time of stuff. So there were still more people being outside um even though they kept their six feet and masks, it was more of a risk for covid.

Melena: Mhm. What would you like to tell future generations about this pandemic?

Arielle: It has been a long time. *both laugh* As the year has been extremely long, and hopefully it's over soon. Um during the time period though, I haven't personally felt a big change in my life however it is a change and it wasn't necessary for it to happen *Melena chuckles* so...

Melena: Yes. Okay well, thank you for this meeting.

Arielle: Thank you.