

Oral History Questions for: Alec Gomeyac

Ashlay: Hello my name is Ashley Gomeyac today's date is March 10, 2021 and I'm here to do an oral history interview with the experiences of people during the COVID-19 pandemic today we are in San Antonio Texas and I have here my brother his name is

Alec: Alec Gomeyac.

Ashlay: and where are you born?

where? Yokosuka Japan but I was in the Navy base so I'm basically I'm a citizen of the United States.

Ashlay: cool, what year were you born?

Alec: I was born in the year 2008.

Ashlay: And date?

Alec: Ugh... August 25.

Ashlay: OK...and what is it that you do for work?

Alec: I am a team member at Target...I mostly do cashier...just anything..like greet people at front of the store so on, so on.

Ashlay: OK how long have you been there?

Alec: I've been there for year...actually over a year now

Ashlay: oh wow, umm...is that where you still are now?

Alec: yes, I still work at target.

Ashlay: OK, and when and how did you first hear about the COVID-19 virus and can you explain your experience about it?

Alec: First time I heard about COVID-19 it was possible to just the media I was just going through probably Instagram or Snapchat just going through and then I just see all these news articles about China having the first cases of COVID-19...umm and then later I just can't I just buy towards to us back in March so yeah any kind of first thoughts or if you think it was gonna end up coming to the US..so yeah.

Ashlay: Any kind of first thoughts or did you think it was gonna end up coming to the U.S. as quickly as it did?

Alec: To be honest I thought it was gonna be OK since with technology now that we would've been at least...ugh...more faster with finding at least something to help with Covid by my expectations were wrong...umm...with all these traveling that that kind of caused the spread to rapidly increased throughout the months.

Ashlay: Okay, umm...can you explain how the coronavirus affected you and your family and or friends...umm any kind of changes?

Alec: Umm...it did a major change...for us luckily we didn't have...we didn't uhg...test positive for COVID-19...ugh it's crazy cuz..since me...that I work mostly with mostly a lot of people especially at target since I'm just into contact with most of guests there...umm...our standards and our way have changed ugh...with how we are socially we have to keep 6 feet apart, we all have to have the new norm of wearing a mask every time to prevent the spread, and also we change our ways hygienically we always have to wash our hands more often, everybody has at least gloves on, ugh...wipes, sanitizer whatever they have just to keep themselves safe and most of all...just...we mostly have to quarantine so we can have a safer environment to prevent that disease.

Ashlay: Have you heard any ways that the virus has affected any of your friends or coworkers?

Alec: Umm, it definitely changed them the same way too. I hear some cases where mostly their relatives, mainly their older ones, who have to be under care because if they came into contact with them their the ones that were mostly life threatening...um yeah, other than that its just the same thing all together...ugh we have to just change our ways all together.

Ashlay: Just be careful right?

Alec: Yeah.

Ashlay: Okay, okay can you explain how COVID-19 affected your daily and or weekly routine umm...like shopping for groceries or the way you spend time with family?

Alec: Umm...one thing for sure when it comes to purchases...was as soon as it started people just bought so much of the cleaning products mostly just sanitizer and wipes...anything they could find. It was just a major panic at first people were just trying to stock up because of the whole quarantine thing. Umm, I don't know why people bought toilet paper for no reason, but that was a thing.

Ashlay: How about your daily or weekly routines, anything changed specifically or still bought the same?

Alec: I always have to stay clean no matter, usually I always wash my hands every time I drive, every time I do an activity, for me I usually work out every time I finish or even before I start always my hands, and

then work too I always wash my hands beforehand and after if I just do one just a small thing. And with masks too...ugh, as I said earlier as I said with it being a new norm that we always have to keep our masks on as it's like our basic necessity at that point.

Ashlay: Okay. Umm, due to the pandemic umm...did you ever have to stay at home or anything like that or were you able to just, since like you said since you work at Target, did they always allow you to be at work or anything like that?

Alec: For me I wasn't, I wasn't that many people that had to be quarantined since I was an essential worker. I was considering an essential worker. I just still did my own thing just the only thing I did was just go to work and just come back home...um I usually...yeah I just did those two. It really didn't affect me that much where I was one of the people that became unemployed. Luckily, I had my job still but I still had to work no matter what through this virus.

Ashlay: Yeah, I think it was the same for me as well, just straight to work, back home, clean yourself and then just call it a day...rinse and repeat kind of deal, right?

Alec: Yeah, exactly.

Ashlay: Do you know anyone that has been affected with the virus? Friends, Family, whoever?

Alec: I had some family members I believe...uhh, they came into contact....they actually tested positive but luckily they all recovered. Umm, co-workers of course they had, they had tested positive but as far as i know that them or their families are doing good, now since they have recovered.

Ashlay: that's good, that's good. Umm, how was adapting to the virus affected your work or school responsibilities?

Alec: for work...umm, with responsibilities I just had to keep my mask on and just have my social distancing. I always have to inform others to wear a mask too since my job is mostly just greeting people going to the store.

Ashlay: But what about school wise?

Alec: Well a school really changed everything since we all have to do it remotely meaning, that we have to do class at home with our, with our mobile device, laptops, or computers and we just do it through there with the WebCam, just having a zoom conference. And that has been going since it started, so yeah.

Ashlay: Okay, I gotcha. Since you are here in Texas...um, you along with myself and the rest of the family was affected by the winter storm that took over..um...what was it like two weeks ago? Whatever the cases is but, during that storm did you think about the virus or did the winter storm pretty much overtake, umm, thoughts of the virus at all or anything like that?

Alec: No, I still thought of the virus no matter what it's...even though Taxes is not really..umm...really known to have a snow winter storms like these...we still have a pandemic going on and even though I...since i work all time i just always just think about covid every time even though, no matter what the case was in terms of whether or just what the circumstances is. And it's sad to say that...um...many, many people don't agree with me, they just worry about the storm instead of the virus.

Ashlay: Because the storm is very temporary.

Alec: Yeah, but one of my experiences when i went to work one time during the storm it's many people just rushed in and everyone was crowded together...just not, not...

Ashlay: Adhering to the precautions, right?

Alec: Exactly, they weren't even caring like caring about what the pandemic was...they just forgot what it was and then they just try to do the same thing like when Covid started just try to grab whatever necessities they need and went home and do their own thing.

Ashlay: It's also hard because of the whole power outages and water outages and things like that. And like you said it is difficult because texas was not prepared for that kind of storm or that kind of snow or ice so..um.. I guess that fight of flight kicked in, where, you know survival is the most important thing, I guess.

Alec: Yeah, like still though, like yes, I understand that like, we're not use to this but still whether ...ugh, just cause there's a weather doesn't mean that we have to push away another, another issue that we still have a virus, so they should still be able to..umm.

Ashlay: Take that into account, right?

Alec: Exactly, to have that in mind.

Ashlay: OK we're finishing up here but well I guess it is March 10. Last quick question for mine, do you think now with the new mandate of pretty much Texas being open a hundred percent, no need of use of the masks, do you think that...like i said this is kind of a distraction to what is still there which is the pandemic. Umm, do you think it's not like I said it's like a distraction and people are going to forget, air

quotation marks, and umm...cause another increase or outburst of cases even though you know there are vaccines out there. But even these vaccines are not preventing the virus, it's just like a booster in a sense ,what are your thoughts on that real quick?

Alec: I think I wouldn't consider that as a distraction because I just know that, I just think that with the government did they just knew what they were doing. Because what I think in that sense when I first heard that...was it was mostly for businesses...umm that they just wanted to open up everything 100%.

Ashlay: Taxes again, right?

Alec: Exactly, and not only that much is business like, I feel like they just didn't care about our health wise because...umm... I don't know if this was, I don't know if this is statistically true but not even 10% of Texas is not even vaccinated yet. Like, like I don't know why, i don't know why he would just, they would just open everything up like that and I just think he is completely ignorant for them to raise that mandate and just say like that, "oh, you don't have to worry about COVID" its just, its just obnoxious to me..it's just dumb all together.

Ashlay: Just referring back to the initial first time we opened up Texas and then we had the second outbreak and now still with the mask mandate, you know. Cases have gone down..umm..not as much as people in the...umm...hospitals and things like that. But...um, yeah I guess we'll just have to see him as the next coming months kind of go. Especially with summer coming along I think it's just gonna be a little bit...umm, I think frightening the same time a little bit anxious...well a lot of anxiousness because like I said summertime is right around the corner people are going to be out and about. It's gonna be hot, especially around here, people are going to be breathing a lot, so I think it's just gonna be a...*sighs* something we're just kind of watch and hopefully doesn't fester into something big again but we'll see. But moving on to the last question would you like to tell the future generation about the pandemic?

Alec: Umm, this pandemic was surprising all together...ugh, all I can say is that if there was another one just please follow the rules. Be mindful of others of course number one thing because right now...I don't know what, I don't know what america has brought in terms of helping others with this whole pandemic and...yeah, that's just basically it.

Ashlay: I think, learn from others because I think other countries have done pretty good as well with it, right? So, I think that might be a good thing to say as well...and that concludes our interview or the interview. I think you for your time, thank you for answering these questions, is there anything else you'd like to say?

Alec: No, that's it.

Ashley: Awesome all right well that includes the interview and thank you