

Project Title: Documenting the CSUSB COVID-19 Experience

**How COVID affected education for him and how he was able to overcome virtual classrooms. As well, talked a bit about how the BLM protests were going on at the time. We discuss how the pandemic took effect on his at home life, and his work life.**

**Interviewees:**

Ronald, Deroiser

**Interviewer:**

Isaiah, Mora

**Interview Date:**

October 14, 2020

**Location:**

Zoom, Redlands, California

**Interview Summary completed by:**

Isaiah, Mora, 2020

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**Topic:**

How COVID affected his education. How he overcame it. How his job was affected by COVID, and how he dealt with it.

**Keywords:**

· COVID, School, Work, Marriage, Personally

**Comments:**

His work experience at the end, reflected the panic going on.

**Interview Index:**

Media Format	Time (hh:mm:ss)	Topic Discussed

MP4	00:00:33	Campus closure and move to virtual classroom setting
MP4	00:10:30	COVID effect on at home life
MP4	00:15:06	Politics going on during the pandemic, and how COVID affected his job.

**Full interview transcript can be found below.**

I: Good morning can you please state your name

R: Hiya my name is Ronald Deroiser, but you can call me Ronnie

I: Alright and you do you consent to being recorded and put in files

R: Yup just make me look good

I: Alright I have a set of questions to ask you regarding your experience with COVID

R: Sounds good

I: Alrighty, so do you recall in March when Cal State University of San Bernardino announced that they will go virtual because of the pandemic

R: I remember when they did I think at the time they just rolled out their cell phone text service and I didn't realize I was a part of, I have gotten little alerts around that time, which is... I mean it was a good system at that time never really thought I will need it. But I was really focus on class because at the time I was still attending obviously and it was toward the end of the year and I had a lot of projects so it was hard to kind of focus on what was going to be happening going forward because I was so focused on just like getting the week done in terms of my school work.

I: Alright, that's interesting, interesting, very different than my experience. How did... how did you feel that ya know CSUSB was going to virtual class?

R: You mean at the time?

I: Yeah at the time, what was your initial thought like, were you on board, were you confused?

R: Well I was... well I thought it was a good idea I mean honestly at the time all, all my professor I was taking were facing immediate pressure to switch to online just in the winter quarter, just in those last few weeks, in fact they all pretty much did their exams online which some of them had to tweak them to make them work, so that was nice because it gave me more flexibility but you know I... I think it was the right call But it's just difficult because you know it's harder on the students because they no longer go somewhere to learn and it's hard on the professor because they have to actively tweak their courses to be engaging while.. in the online format. So yeah.

I: Okay okay now moving onto questions I have, what role has technology played during the pandemic and have you had to acquire any new skills to effectively use unfamiliar technologies?

R: Um, technology obviously for class have to use zoom, and I never use Zoom personally. I acatully have avoided taking online classes, because I.. I feel like it makes me less responsible. And it's easier to forget you even have class so um I had to acquire a webcam for my classes when I had to switch over to zoom. And in this day in age it's not easy, they... I had to call around a few stores before I finally got a hold of somebody at staples, they told me to come, when they opened the following day because they were getting two in stock. And I ended up

coming a little late and I luckily...and the guy went to the back and found it on the load. And brought it out to me and it wasn't the one i wanted but it was the one i was going to get because they were getting priced gouged online, so, I just learned you know basically just try to keep myself accountable on a online environment, and it's still difficult, I still struggle with it but you know it's the reality of the situation and luckily, i think most professors are understanding and kind of just try to adjust their courses accordingly.

I: That was well put better than I could've explained it. So what is your setup look like right now, cause you know, you mentioned you have a webcam I assume this day in age, every computer Ipad, laptop has a camera, so obviously yours does not.

R: I have a custom rig that I that... (sound cuts out) something that I was really interested in to be honest

I: I get you it's a...

R: And obviously if i wanted it i could always get it, some of them are just always built in and just privacy reasons as well, I don't. After I finish using it I just try to unplug it cause you never know who's watching it

I: Yeah big brother

R: Exactly, my setup, it's not that different from what it would be normally, cause I still work at a desk that I was during school it just i have to activate take notes on it which is a little different on it and cause I wouldn't normally... I would write you know notes, a lot of it I will type, so i would write on my desk, but my desk can be cluttered at times. My setup is pretty much the same just had to you know, I have to do more work in it obviously, because of the pandemic.

I: Yeah of course, of course, I see. Now you're a student obviously, so how's it been you know learning through zoom, emailing, blackboard, which is the website our school uses for professors and students to kind of give and turn in work?

R: I find, I found it difficult, and I.. you know I don't mind using online resources especially, you know with class as well, but classes themselves, can you know, I had multiple classes get shut down this semester because of the tech problems. Which wouldn't happen in a class environment and you know it's also frustrating because you know, when you have in class instruction there is only so many ways the professor can only do it. Like I find with online all of my professors are really doing things radically different and have different release time tables which makes it really kind of frustrating to keep track of it all. I've never been the most organized person but just keeping track of all the assignments and how they handle things can be really a chore, so I mean everything has been a challenge, I still learn but I just... it's been difficult to put it bluntly.

I: Yeah I agree with that. So CSUSB is known for like being a really good commuting school, for a four year, so are you a commuter?

R: I am a commuter

I: Okay so now having the closure, the campus shut down you know campus services aren't available you know they closure of resident halls, dining rooms, you know the bookstore, has that affected you in any way?

R: Aside from missing class you know in person, not really I save money on my parking and gas cause I don't have to commute to twenty something minutes. It... I never really engaged with campus and really just came for class. I mean I would occasionally when i had a waiting period between class, i would go sit in my car and hope that i was parked in a spot that the school WIFI

would connect to. In fact I usually started to find a good spot for it and it was kind of away from everything so I can always find parking, so. But in terms of the services i, i really haven't used them, usually a bit of counseling but that was because it was required.

I: Yeah. And then obviously since covid hit how has quarantine, isolation social distancing how has that affected your life through relationships with your friends and family

R: it's been hard especially when we started i took it really seriously, i mean i think a lot of people did and so i mean for my partner specifically she found it very difficult not going to see anybody and really just not going anywhere besides work because i took care of the grocery and supplies so you know she was stressed out about it that made me stressed but i really tried to push on it and well i mean we it put a strain i've loosen up i eventually loosened up and we saw some immediate friends and family which is against you know really isn't what your supposed to be doing but we've done it and you know nothings happened obviously know one has gotten sick but its you know its hard and i've seen my grandparents they obviously like to see more of me and i've tried not see them because i don't want to risk transmitting anything i'm not aware of you know from work or my friends in real life so i mean its just its made it hard my mom has had some personal she hasn't been diagnosed but she has some illnesses which has been distinct that she might so we had to quarantine her from her a few times

I: before we started the interview i don't know if you previously mentioned to me before that your recently engaged and i was just curious how has that like affected your you know what's the word im what's the phrase looking for how has that affected your like relationship with your fiance like has that disrupted any wedding plans did you have to move dates you know etc.

R: actually i was actually became engaged in covid and let me tell you it wasn't easy figuring out i was gonna do it because when i wanted to do it everything was closed so i was either looking at doing it at home or basically going to a park because that was the only thing that's opened so i decided to do it at home and try to make as special as i could by incorporating her family who by video which i had to go personally take my self and her mom almost didn't even let me in because she's so worried about it so it was tough i mean obviously she said yes but we've had covid over our head through the entire planning phase while we both thought that it would be gone by our wedding date which is going to be July 10 of 2021 its very its prevalent i don't see it becoming an issue in terms of like people attending maybe a few people but the most important players i think are all on board and given the information we have at this moment it seems likely that we there will be wide spreading a vaccine at least at that point

I: yes yes that's the plan

R: right

I: so how have you been handling the stress you know i know i've had stress myself and i know friends and family of mine have been as well so i just want to know how you handling it

R: i feel like i handle it pretty well going out everything is nice and i miss people but i personally was okay with staying in more i have you know personal hobbies that i keep myself busy with and i've always liked being online and so that doesn't bother me too much just mostly missing people school and everytnings caused more stress it was really difficult when we were having the racial protests going on at the same time as everything else with school and the virus it was just a really crazy time and i think, i think i may of gotten a grade worse last semester because of that then i would normally on a normal circumstances but i feel like i handled it pretty well i just try to engage with my fiance because we live together and obviously we are going to see

each other and just try and relax you know watch movies just you know give myself time to enjoy things

I: i see i see that's good so sounds like your handling it better than i am, so what are your feelings like not knowing if we are going to go back to school you know or if it's going to stay like this for maybe the next 2 years or year or so how you feeling about that uncertainty

R: well for me it really just ends next semester because im suppose to graduate and that's already been announced that's being online so i'm already kind of made peace with the fact that i'm probably never go back to CSUB in person atleast as an undergraduate i have thought about going graduate school so that may come up but at the present i'm really focus laser focused is on graduating so i mean it's, its worrisome but then at the same time the degree im focusing on, i'm pursuing in archival studies i really there's only a few programs that are actually certified the way i want them to be one of them is online only anyways it just something im going to have adjust to

I: Okay. Now a little off topic not too much in regards to COIVD not too much but do you recall the political climate we are in you know with the whole black lives matter movement, re-election Is coming up very very soon within the next month do you remember any of that or want to give any of your opinions out?

R: Sounds like you're baiting me

I: I'm not, I'm not.

R: Yeah of course I do I'm a political junkie as I like to put it. I follow the news pretty religiously. I read my New York Times pretty closely. Yeah I remember it. I personally never participated in any of the protests. I didn't think it was a good idea because of the virus. I honestly think that the whole movement was bad timing because of their virus. But in the aftermath of what happened to George Floyd I understood and just you know over the last few years we had multiple videos come out that just plain sight, you know see the strength in the argument that there is something that needs to be done about the police department. I guess you can say I kind of support them in spirit but obviously things got out of hand, and that's just going to happen with any movement. You can't control all the offshoots

I: Of course

R: So anyways, you know that played some stress on me. So in terms of the moment you know, I kind of wish it the best. But it's been difficult. It sucks because there's people on one side that see it one way and people who see it the other. And then there's the people that get stuck in the middle.

I: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I see what you are saying I agree.

R: Yeah it's, you know, so I, in that regard I guess I am a supporter. But I just think it was bad timing. You know you can't control that. So in terms of our leadership, I think it was poorly handled. I think that we... I just think that we need better leadership at the time, because things could've de-escalated faster than they currently are. So that's my opinion of what's been going on at the time.

I: Okay, cool cool. Is there anything you would like to add COVID-19 experience?

R: I don't know, have I told you about my work?

I: Oh! How has your work been, I know you're employed, how is that?

R: I am employed. I do work, thank you very much. Yeah it was challenging you know just being a full time student with pretty much a full time job. Full time is forty hours, my work usually gives me at least thirty, I guess semi- full time is what we can call it, because part time, what twenty.

I: Yeah.

R: That's just tough in general. There was a lot more stress at work with everything that is going on because there was a big drive to, you know, basically stock, you know up in case something happens which that ended up largely being the worst thing that happened for you know I think a lot of people. I work at a grocery store, I work at Food4Less, and it was to put it lightly it was ravaged. I come in at night, and my job is to clean up the shelves and make them presentable, well my job basically became impossible after the initial surge of people buying and I basically was left of just picking up what's just left and maybe just straightening it out just. I basically became the cashier at the time because there was just nothing for me to do because it was either pointless because it was just going to get ravaged to the point where it was pointless or...

I: Yeah yeah yeah.

R: Just you know, nothing to touch because we just sold out of it. We had entire aisles gone, especially the cleaning supplies, and it was like one thing after the other. At first it was like cleaning, you know and then there was like the food, and medicine, and it was toilet paper. So I mean it was just really difficult and in fact actually and I think it was true for a lot of people (inaudible). It pushed me to stock up myself because seeing something... I've worked at my work for close to five years now, being so ravaged just there to being nothing, where our truck just not showing up with what they are supposed to it pushed me to stock up myself on what we had, because I knew it was going to be bought. And I didn't know that it would always be available for me later on, so one of those mornings my manager he looked at us all and looked defeated and he just said I'm going to open up, and this was like an hour before we opened, he said, I'm going to open up on checkstand one, he says if you guy want to buy anything just grab a cart and shop. He says, I'm not going to say nothing to nobody. So he says, go shop grab what you need, I'll check you out and we'll... it'll be no big deal. So I grabbed a cart and I ended up buying something close to three hundred dollars worth of stuff that I didn't plan on doing because I was so afraid of just because I had to go on multiple days just cleaning up what was left, and what was left wasn't much. We had sales records that just got trumped because of the fact that... I mean... we like... I remember we one day we had double thanksgiving which is typically our biggest day of the year and the following day we beat that. So yeah I guess the following day after that we probably would've beat it if we actually had product to sell. So it was just nuts and you know that experience buying things I mean like I was apologizing to my manager and he was like, its ok its ok. But we actually had some of my co-workers went before me, and they tried to take their stuff out to their car before we opened and I was the last one getting checked out before we opened and they opened the door, and we didn't noticed this, but there was a whole line of people lined up outside outdoor all the way down the street, and they just basically were very angry that we as employees able to shop and they started yelling profanities at my co-workers, and somebody was yelling for somebody to shoot her for shopping.

I: Really?

R: And it was really, you know eye opening, they were able to get everyone in and nobody was hurt but my manager was just, when that was going on just looked at me and said, don't you

take this big cart out there, he says take this to the back room work your shift and then you can take it out the back room when you leave and that is what exactly what i did so. And even then walking out with it was nerve racking because you never know if someone's going to stop you and ask, where did you find that you know, and noticed that you're a worker.

I: Yeah, yeah I can sympathize with that and vouch for you that's all true. I had a very similar experience as well.

R: Well it's intense that's for sure.

I: Yeah, I want to thank you Ronnie, Ronald for participating in this interview and yeah that's it appreciate it.

## **Interview Transcript**

### **Interviewees:**

Ronald, Deroiser

### **Interviewer:**

Isaiah, Mora

### **Interview Date:**

October 14, 2020

### **Location:**

Zoom, Redlands, California

### **Length:**

00:23:32

### **Media format:**

MP4

### **List of Acronyms:**

I=Isaiah

R=Ronald

### **Interview Transcript completed by:**

Isaiah, Mora, 2020

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**Start of Interview:** 00:00:00

**End of Interview:** 00:23:32

