

Stephanie Huynh

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### During This Time

It's now May. The month I was looking forward to this year. It's when classes ended, spring began, and my birthday came. But I guess all my plans went down the drain. This isn't your typical "what happened to you during the coronavirus pandemic" paper; I guess I am different. Unlike most of the students here, I am a commuter and a local. I couldn't get away from what was happening around Springfield, instead, I was submerged deep into it.

I am currently a junior in the Health Science major, so for me, this pandemic is a wonderful, yet terrible learning experience. My professors all took this opportunity to implement what we were learning in the current situation. As neighboring colleges decided to go online, I dreaded Springfield College doing so as well. I couldn't get away from home, at the end of the day, I went home to my bed and slept, so school was the only other place I'd be. You'd find me in the learning commons or the Union the most. For me, it was my haven away from home, a place I could be alone and not controlled. But that too was taken away from me by the coronavirus.

Having to stay home and remained home is hard for me. I share a room with my younger sister and for both of us to try to school and share a room was simply impossible. It appears I might just fail this semester. I felt all my efforts disappear and my determination with it. Going online felt impossible with my course load. All my labs online, and language class online, how was I going to do this? On top of this, my parents didn't understand that I was supposed to be in "school-mode" not "home-mode". There was no clean line that separated the two mindsets. For them, I was just home 24/7 and was able to answer all their calls. It was a hard switch online, to

have to keep motivated and determined to complete the semester. On top of this, most of my teachers were new to our Brightspace system, thus going online was new to both of us. Towards our finals, my brother was the one who gave me my determination once again.

My brother is currently a patient care technician at Baystate Medical Center here in Springfield and a part-time student at Springfield Technical Community College. When the pandemic started to get worse, my brother was pushed deeper into the hospital and had to treat COVID-19 positive and negative patients. On top of this, he was keeping up with his course work online and keeping safe from the virus. His constant push in the hospital and at school inspired me to push through school and finish on a big note.

Being home was different now. My parents always tried to teach me something I had already known and understood. They would tell me something different about the pandemic and when I try to tell them otherwise, they tell me no and that I'm wrong. Last time I checked; I am the one getting a degree in this. With this constant attitude for the last couple of months, I grew an extra skin and pride in my major. Therefore, I wanted to go into health sciences, because of no matter if the world was ending, public health and health care are always there.

The world did an amazing job responding, especially Vietnam. And yes, I am Vietnamese-American, so I am extremely proud. However less proud of how the U.S. handled itself in this situation. I felt more anger run through my body as I watched the news and protesters go on and on. How could you fail humankind in such a time of need, where selfishness is out in the open? I hope this pandemic can teach our government officials a lesson and the citizens as well. There is no one way of doing things and everyone is missing information or are too ignorant to except anything other than what they think is right.

This pandemic gave people a reason to point fingers and blame others. It gave people a reason to be ignorant and selfish. It revealed the problems the United States had with their response to this virus or the lack of response. It also revealed to me who I was as a person, where my haven was, and just how much I missed being able to have books surrounding me while I do my homework. I know that I have taken school for granted. The coronavirus pandemic became our new normality for the time being, and that changed is needed to be done before we can go back to the old days.