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SCU IN QUARANTINE

Our Pandemic Stories

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Navigating Our New Normal

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Before March 2020, I had rarely ever heard the words “pandemic” or “quarantine” but they quickly became a part of my daily vocabulary. My time at home began with FaceTimes and online games with friends. As time progressed, and it was evident that the pandemic wasn’t going away any time soon, phone calls tapered off. Everyone began to realize that this was the new normal. Calling and spending time on Zoom became exhausting and meeting up 6 feet apart during the winter months in the suburbs of Chicago was difficult.

My friends and I would find an empty parking lot and back up our cars in order to make a circle with our trunks. Bundling up in 20 degree weather to sit in the backs of our cars became the only way I could spend time with others. Socially distanced, we would talk and reminisce about pre-pandemic times. As the weather began to warm, we would spend time outside in each other’s backyards. Overall, I began to appreciate the moments I got to spend with my friends so much more.

I began to feel less isolated in the summer as my friends and I felt more comfortable spending long periods of time together in the same space. After not receiving a graduation, my friends and I decided to create our own fun. I went up to a friend’s lake house where it was nice to be social after spending so much time apart. Spending time on the water, far from others, was exactly what I needed.

In the fall, I was disappointed that I wasn’t able to come to SCU. Life did become more busy during college, but I made sure to spend valuable time with family. It was nice to bring back an old tradition of playing board games as a family over the weekend. I did notice that my balance between school and home life had improved greatly during quarantine.

In the winter, I was the only one of my friends left at home, so I put in a lot of effort to make the best of it. I began doing little things to take up my time. I tried to learn how to knit and make intricate friendship bracelets to send to my friends. Doing small, relaxing things to pass the time is something that would have been unfathomable in pre-pandemic life. It was refreshing to finally do something for myself and not focus solely on school all the time.

As much as the pandemic has been a burden, it has also been a learning experience. Taking time to focus on my family and de-stress is something I hadn’t done in a long time.



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