**COVID-19**

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COVID-19 has changed my life drastically over the past six months in many different ways. Back in March when COVID-19 first became a concern, I like many others, was forced to move out of my dorm room for the remainder of the year and have my classes online. This was a very mentally straining time for me as I am from out of state and was forced to move out with very short notice and because of this, I wasn’t able to say goodbye to any of my friends. Once I got home, I had to follow quarantine to an extreme because my dad is a physical therapist and works at a nursing home. I did not want to be the reason COVID-19 got into that building so for the entire time that I was in my hometown I had very little contact with anyone that I did not live with. This led me to be extremely excited to get back to school in August.

August finally rolled around and I moved into my sorority house. For the first week everything was as expected not completely normal, but as normal as it could be. The second though is when everything changed. I got a text message saying that we had a positive case in the house. I was scared and left the house and stayed with some of my sisters that did not live at the sorority house. During this time the girls that I was staying with and I decided to get tested just to be safe. Unfortunately, my test came back positive and I had COVID-19. I was asymptomatic but I didn’t feel comfortable staying with my friends anymore because they all came back negative. I was going to go and quarantine at the sorority house but by this time the house was already put on lockdown and I was not allowed back in because I chose to not stay when we were given the option when the lockdown was first set in place.

At this point I was stressed and ready to just give up on school and go back home for the rest of the year. Luckily, I was texting another friend of mine about the whole situation and how I was most likely going home. She did not want that to happen, so she offered for me to stay with her until the house opened back up. I was still unsure if I wanted because I did not want to be the reason that other people got it. She completely got that and then reassured me saying that her boyfriend’s roommates have it so I wouldn’t be the only one around them that could potentially affect them.

While this year has been the most mentally straining, I am proud of the way I have handled myself through it. While my college experience will never be the typical one, I am thankful that this awful sickness has showed me the people in my life who care for me and will never let me give up. This pandemic has shown me how much I can handle and who in my life will be there for me through thick and thin, and for that I am appreciative.