

Des Moines Area Community College

## Open SPACE @ DMACC

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Life in the Times of Coronavirus: stories from  
students, staff, & faculty

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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### Life in the Times of Coronavirus

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ENG105 – Comp I

April 21, 2020

### Current State of Uncertainty

This current time is not only historical for our country but also for the world. Business have closed, school have closed and moved to online classes and online learning, unemployment rates are through the roof, family members unable to visit their loved ones in hospitals and long term care centers, and a feeling of uncertainty that we don't know when it will end. Not everyone can stay home with their loved ones during this time, like the government is suggesting. There are "essential" employees that are needed on the front line to get us through this uncertain time. Healthcare workers are among the largest and most vulnerable of the essential workers. I am included in that group of people. During this time trying to figure out how to manage work, classes moving online, and trying to keep my kids occupied under one roof has been nothing short of a challenge.

I work at Mary Greeley Medical Center in Ames as a Patient Care Tech on the Med Surg floor. Typically, I care for patients that have just come out of surgery and are sometimes recovering for multiple weeks after sometimes complicated procedures. When coronavirus started making its way into not only the United States but also Iowa, all the elective procedures were cancelled. The only surgeries that were allowed to continue were those that if not performed would cause more harm to the patient in the long-term aspect. Once that decision was made it became very clear that we would have the room on our floor to care for additional patients since we wouldn't be taking out regular patient demographic. The hospital did decide to put all the patients with either suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus on this floor. Once we started seeing more and more of these patients come in and the number of our surgical patients decrease that left me feeling very anxious and nervous about going to work. The reason I say that was not because I didn't want to care for these patients but because of my son Luke. He is considered high risk because of his past and current medical conditions. At this point I had a conversation with my supervisor. We figured out a way I can still work but not have to be in direct contact with these patients and cause a higher risk of exposing Luke to it. For the time being I will be assigned to another floor. Because I am one of his primary caregivers, if he were to catch the virus his chance of surviving would not be good and if he did survive we would lose a lot of the progress we have made recently with getting him to . a normal kid per say.

Trying to transition from face-to-face classes to online learning has been, in some respects easier but in others more difficult than expected. One of my classes, Nutrition, was already all online. The only thing that has changed was the instructor has allowed more time from us to complete the assignments so that we can account for all the other changes we are having to deal with. As for my Intro to Biology class that has been a little more difficult. Trying to figure out a way to do the labs online has been a little more challenging than expected. With my speech class that has not really changed. We are still meeting most of our regular class times. We are also doing out speeches fairly similar to how we would have if we were still face-to-face. Obviously, there are some changes that have had to be made by they are minor and easily work able. Overall, the transition has not been horrible, though still wishing

we could have finished out the semester with face-to-face classes. Trying to make time to get all my work completed on time has been some what of a struggle, but somehow have made it through thus far.

Finally, both of my kids were in school, one for the full day and the other for only a half day, are now at home all day. Neither of them has left the house since before Spring Break. They have not been able to go outside as much as we would have like to play and to burn off some of their energy due to the weather either being to cold or rainy. We have been trying to keep them occupied with activities around to give them something to do as well as to try and keep their academics intact. The schools have been providing them with activities they can do at home, which has been extremely helpful as well. They have gotten to the point they are just tired of being stuck in the house and honestly, I do not blame them! Neither of them will be going anywhere until we know this is not a concern like it is currently.

The current state of the nation, because of the pandemic has brought everyone to a common level of having to accept change. Even though most of us do not like change; this is not something we can change. We must accept it and take it day by day. There is light at the end of this long tunnel. Even though we may not see it, it is there and we will make it through this together.

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