

Devon Bling

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History 129A

May 15, 2020

Covid-19

My name is Devon Bling. I am a junior year athlete at UCLA. The ongoing pandemic that has been circulating the world these past few months took everyone by surprise. People lost their jobs, sporting events have been cancelled, in class lectures and discussions have turned into online learning, yet no one is even close to producing a vaccine. I am an athlete at UCLA, being a part of the UCLA Men's Golf Program. This pandemic ended my junior season early, resulting in a missed opportunity in competing for the National Championship that would have been this month. Not only has this pandemic affected myself and my golf, but it has taken a toll on my family members, especially some of them who are just graduating college or high school. I cannot begin to imagine the toll this pandemic has taken on family owned business or any business for that matter. This paper will reflect my feelings towards the pandemic, its effect on me and my family, and how this pandemic could change life as we knew it for a long time.

I am originally from a small town by the name of Ridgecrest, California. We are pretty well known for the large earthquakes we had last July. Our town is also heavily reliant on the Navy Base here. My father is an engineer who has worked here for almost 40 years. The Navy Base also holds the only golf course available to me within 100

miles. It is my only place to practice and improve my golf game. As California has been on lockdown since mid March, the Navy Base has only been open and limited to essential personnel. For example, my Father has the clearance to get on the Base but me and my brother do not. It has been that way to this day even though golf courses have started to open. This is a huge negative to me as normally I would be competing in NCAA Championships at this time, but rather than doing that, I haven't been able to go to an actual golf course since my last tournament in March. Although there are Country Clubs that have opened in other areas, due to the new Coronavirus rules, no guests are allowed at any of the courses, therefore not allowing me and my brother to practice. This is the downfall of coming from a small town where I am not a member at a country club. Up to this moment in time, I have not been able to properly practice on a golf course. As a team at UCLA, I personally felt that we had the ability to contend in a National Championship, so having the season cut short was heartbreaking. Also, right before everything got shut down, I had won two tournaments in a row, so again, the coronavirus cut my momentum immediately. My practice regimine now includes hitting golf balls into a net at my house, while also utilizing the acreage my family has, and finally putting on an indoor mat.

As for my brother, Coronavirus shut down the rest of his senior year in High school. This means that he did not get to compete in high school golf with CIF, he is not able to go to his prom, his graduation trip, and his safe grad celebration. These are all activities that one would look forward to while being a senior in high school. There isn't

going to be a graduation ceremony for him, which is the first stepping stone into becoming an adult. I really feel for all of the graduating seniors this year, as they had all of the best activities taken away from them because of the Coronavirus. My brother also got stripped of the opportunity to win the CIF State Championship which was a feat that I was just short of. He did not get to have the chance to beat my course records at our home course. I know he must be heartbroken about this but I also feel badly about that too. Coronavirus took away the opportunity for my brother to have an amazing senior year of high school. My dad has been affected a little bit differently because he technically can still get onto the Navy Base. However, he only goes into work for meetings once a week and does the rest of his work at home. In relation to my cousins and family in northern California, I have multiple family members that work in hospitals which are battling the coronavirus. They are working hard each and every day, while putting their loved ones at risk, to fight against the virus that has stopped everything in the world. This brings me to my next concern

Since all sporting events, concerts, schools, and any other social gatherings have been stopped, when would it be okay to move forward. Some famous athletes talk about the crowds' influence on their games and who the crowd gave them determination. Music artists will not be able to gather to have concerts anytime soon, even if there happens to be a vaccine for the virus. However, there is a chance there may not ever be a vaccine. Anything that someone would consider normal 3 months ago will not be the same for a long time now. For how long do we have to wear masks

in public, for how long do we need to social distance, for how long do we need to be concerned about our safety in a public setting, for how long should we be scared to go eat at a restaurant or bar. There are certain businesses that are going to have a heavy negative effect moving forward, and those include nightclubs, bars, restaurants in malls and any sporting arenas. Even though there is going to be an influx of people who will go everywhere and anywhere when everything reopens in California, there will always be those who will hesitate on going anywhere. I believe that there are going to be certain rules that will be implemented for a long time. I believe some of these new rules include the wearing of masks as a restaurant cook, waiter, or waitress, and not handshaking. Not being able to handshake will be a very drastic change, for how small it sounds. Personally, I would normally handshake everyone at the first tee, and after the round thanking everyone for the honor to play with them. I am not sure what we are going to do now with the new Coronavirus rules. A situation like this also hurts companies badly as we all have seen with the stock market. Companies are losing money rapidly, but some are actually increasing their worth. There was a time a few weeks ago where high level politicians were scared of falling into another round of the Great Depression. As anyone can see, the Coronavirus has affected everyone differently and negatively impacted the economy to a point where it may take a long while to fully recover.

Going forwards, I know the United States is full of strong people who will be able to adapt to all the new situations that will occur in the near future. As for myself, I have

newfound respect and admiration for all of the amazing things that I have access to in my life. When I next step foot on the golf course, I am going to be so grateful to be able to look down the fairway again and putt on a real green. I am sure anyone will be much more grateful to resume their daily activities. Going back in time, the other epidemics and pandemics in the world have been horrible, but the country has been able to adapt and recover to get tot where we are today. The 1918 flu pandemic was said to have killed over 50 million people. At that time I am sure that there were people who thought that the entire world's population was going to be killed off. There was the swine flu, bird flu, the black death, the bubonic plague, and there is one common denominator between them all. The world has recovered and gone on to be better than it was before. This Coronavirus Pandemic, although dangerous, has opened up the eyes of the people to make changes in their life for the betterment of other people. I know for my family and I, we have newfound appreciation for everything we have. There will be drastic changes made, to prevent things like this from happening again, but in conclusion, I believe that the world will come back and everyone will be able to live their dream once again. It may take longer than everyone hopes, but I do think that this will resolve and the world will be better off in the future.