

Interviewer: Christin Vivona

Interviewee: Thomas (TJ.) Manzo Jr.

MU 004 HS

November 30, 2012

V: This is Christin Vivona, interviewing for Monmouth University, on November 30, 2012, uh about one o'clock, in Wilson Hall. And I am interviewing T.J. Manzo, Thomas Manzo Jr., about Hurricane Sandy. So, I know I have already said it, but will you please state your name for me?

M: T.J. Manzo. Thomas Manzo Jr.

V: Thank you, and where were you born?

M: Long Branch, New Jersey.

V: And can you just give me a little bit about your life growing up in this area? What town you grew up in? A little bit about your parents and your family?

M: Ok, well I grew up in West Long Branch, New Jersey. I went to preschool, middle school, high school, and now college all in the same town. I moved ten times. I'm currently residing in Oceanport, New Jersey. And my parents, my mother works here at Monmouth as an Office Coordinator for Public Affairs, my father is retired law enforcement, and my sister is a recent graduate of Monmouth now currently teaching Spanish for the Long Branch School District.

V: Ok, and do you all live in the same area?

M: We do. We all live together, in one house.

V: Wow, ok and urn, let's see, how old are you?

M: Currently I'm twenty years old.

V: Twenty years old, and what is your occupation?

M: My occupation is a Class Two Police Officer with the Long Branch Police Department.

V: Ok, and do you study at all?

M: I study Criminal Justice here at Monmouth.

V: Here at Monmouth. Ok, so you have been living in this area your whole life?

V: Ok, now getting back to your police work, in the past what have your responsibilities been doing police work?

M: Uh, my main responsibilities for policing in Long Branch are to enforce the local ordinances as

well as the motor vehicle laws within the town and jurisdiction of Long Branch, and mostly my main hours of work would be in the summer season, and part time during the off season, winter, spring.

V: So, during this time, you are part time?

M: Correct.

V: Have you ever seen any storms or anything like Sandy?

M: The only thing closest to Sandy would have been Hurricane Irene last summer, but even that didn't compare to the damage we've seen from Hurricane Sandy.

V: So, urn, what about during Irene? What were your responsibilities then?

M: During Irene I was assigned to do door to door evacuations for residents in the evacuation zone, as well as, during the storm, making sure that everybody, since we were in a state of emergency, was not outside, not in any vehicle, not outside taking pictures by the boardwalk or by the beach, as well as making sure media was not still filming as the storm was approaching.

V: Did you encounter any problems, any fights or anything, people didn't want to leave?

M: During Irene people did voice their opinion of how they were just going to wait it out, because they didn't believe that Irene was a credible threat. So there were some people in the evacuation zone, which was mandatory at the time, that still stayed, and we advised them that if they were in any trouble, since we were in a state of emergency, there was nothing that we would be able to do, if their house or themselves were in any danger.

V: That's good. Now did anything change during Sandy? What were your responsibilities then in comparison with Irene?

M: Again, during Sandy I was assigned to notify residents in the emergency evacuation zone. Urn, this time the zone, the emergency evacuation zone, was expanded, which it uh became more residents than last time, and once the storm was approaching, again I was making sure everybody was indoors and that the people that were evacuating were seeking shelter elsewhere. And as the storm was approaching I was assigned to the Long Branch Middle School, which was acting as a temporary emergency shelter for residents that didn't have a place to go. And they were eventually transported to here, at the MAC center, which was a long-term emergency shelter.

V: Ok, so how were people reacting to the storm? Any differently than Irene or did you find pretty much the same things?

M: Unfortunately, since Hurricane Irene wasn't as impactful as it was predicted, many people were compared the storm, this current storm, to what they experienced during Irene. So therefore they said, we left last time, nothing really happened, so we are just going to hunker down and wait this time. Unfortunately now we know that it was a lot worse than Irene, so the people that didn't leave were in harm 's way and eventually we did have to go to some houses and get them out and bring them to the shelters.

V: What was that like? Was that frustrating to know that you had told those people to leave and now you are putting your life in danger for them?

M: There was a sense of frustration after the fact; during the fact our main concern was making sure everybody was safe. And once we were at the shelter and we were all safe, we were kind of frustrated to know that we did tell these people that once the storm was coming, and, we weren't going to be answering any calls, and we were going to be in shelters ourselves as first responders, not endangering ourselves, but we did have to act when they had to get out.

V: Ok, and when you were telling these people to leave, what did you expect as a police officer did you expect it to be like Irene? Were you telling them to leave for their safety, but probably not sure that it was going to end up being that bad, or did you expect to see what we saw?

M: I did not expect to see the devastation we saw. I figured it would be similar to Irene. And we were telling people that it was predicted to be slightly, ifnot a little bit more worse than [rene. So we were definitely using Irene as a benchmark during our evacuation, but now we know that it was a Jot worse than what it was.

V: Yeah. Did people see devastation that weren't evacuated during Lrene and in the beginning of Sandy?

M: Yes there, urn, obviously the storm surge was a lot higher than Hurricane Irene so the people who were in a flood zone saw a dramatic increase in flood than they did during Irene, so we, urn, we experienced people who were staying home have water in their houses while they were staying in the house, and when Irene was here they didn 't even have water in their driveway or in their yard.

V: And they were in the house at the time?

M: They were in the house. And when they called the police, we tried to get down there with our certain equipment that is specifically made to maneuver in high flood, but unfortunately the flooding was so great in mass that we weren't allowed to get in the area, so wejust had to tell them to bring a bed mattress up to their second floor and if they didn't have a second floor put it in their attic and stay in their attic.

V: Wow. And what is that equipment? Are they boats or trucks?

M: Um, it's what they call a deuce and a half, which is, military usually uses this, this um, vehicle. It's all terrain vehicle, which is designed to maneuver in up to three feet of water, and you never really see them on the roads unless it's during times like this of natural disaster or state of emergencies or sometimes when there's a blizzard or snow.

V: And what was, was there a moment when you realized "wow this is a lot worse than Irene this is really getting out of hand?"

M: Um we did have special units, water rescue units, going around which are officers specially trained in water rescue and they were giving us updates. And when they said that Avenel Boulevard, which is a block in from the ocean, had a current and was eight feet under water was when I realized that this is definitely a dangerous storm, one of the worst that we've seen in our lifetime, if not in this century.

V: And as a policeman, how do you react to that? Is there initial fear, do you stay focused?

M: Um, thankfully there was a sense of focus that stayed in tact. The fear didn't really come until I was indoors and was thinking of my own personal property, which was in an emergency evacuation, so at work, thankfully, I stayed calm, cool, and collected, which is what we were trained to do in the Police Academy, and they always say that when you're in that time when you have to put your training to work that your training overtakes your fear. So, I did definitely feel that that occurred.

V: It definitely worked?

M: Yes.

V: That's good. (Laughter) Now, where was your family during this time? Clearly

V: Ok, so you still remain optimistic?

M: Oh, you have to. There's no other way to be during this time.

V: It's true. All right, now I want to talk a little bit about um, your experiences, your they were separate from you.

M: They were separate from me, and they did evacuate as they were instructed to do by the Oceanport officials, and they evacuated to Wall Township, which was not in an evacuation zone. So, my mom, my dad, my sister, along with cousins, and aunts and uncles went to a relative's house in Wall.

V: Ok, and was it hard being away from them? Were you able to communicate with them at all?

M: Like ... well, when I was working, it was in the back of my head, but it wasn't my major priority. It was until I was in the shelter myself is when I finally got to make contact with my family, which was probably about an hour to two hours into the storm. And once I knew they were

ok and safe, and I let them know I was ok and safe, is when I, kind of, I was definitely more relaxed and calm.

V: Ok. Were there any, let 's see, were there any big moments that you want to talk about? Anything during the storm that you remember as like a great triumph or a regret?

M: Definitely something that impacted me that I probably will never forget in my career with law enforcement, was when we finally got the all-clear sign to stay indoors and stay off the road, all first responders are off the road and indoors, and probably about fifteen minutes after that assignment was given, we had a report that a tree, a large tree, fell into one of our apartment projects, and there was a gas leak that sprung. So then we were immediately assigned to go in those deuce and a half trucks that I mentioned, those specially assigned vehicles, and we had to go and get all the families out of the apartment and bring them back to the middle school so they could seek shelter. And urn, there was a moment where a mother gave me her five year old son, and just pretty much threw him into my arms, and that was when I realized that people are, you know, are going beyond what they expected, and putting their life in other people's hands, hoping that the first responders are trained and are able to get them to safety.

V: And how has that changed you, seeing things like that, how has that changed you as a policeman and as a person?

M: It definitely makes you more understandable. It's easy to judge people and not have their background in mind, but then again, when something as powerful as a natural disaster, it makes everybody equal, everybody's fending for themselves, everybody is in the same danger, it doesn't matter how much money you have, or where you came from, you're still just as equally in that danger. You know, nothing's going to save you unless it's a helping hand, or someone that's going to go above and beyond and helping you out. So it definitely put everything in perspective.

V: Now, did this change your dreams of becoming a policeman full time? Did this make you say I don't think so and run away, or is this something you definitely want to do?

M: Yeah, this definitely put the nail in the coffin to me wanting to become a police officer, because it showed, you know, 99.9% of the time your job goes unnoticed, and, you know, sometimes people might even see law enforcement officials as the enemy, and they' re out to get people, but being able to do something, where you can help people for the good, and have it go a little bit noticed, then that makes you want to do it everyday.

V: So this is definitely something you want to do, because it's probably not going to get much harder than that, right?

M: Absolutely (Laughter).

V: Now, urn, how has this changed your view of the area? Because, you said that you grew up here all your life, seeing now, looking like a war zone, honestly, how has that changed your view of the area? Anything at all?

M: Urn, it's definitely sad and depressing to see some of the places where you grew up, you know, Pier Village, you know, we spent most of our time growing up there, a beach club where I was a part of, down by Monmouth Beach, which is the neighboring town of Long Branch, just seeing that being down to the bare bones, and down to their studs of the wall, definitely just shows you how real this is, but it does show you how people come together, and we'll rebuild back to a sense

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V: That's good. (Laughter) Now, where was your family during this time? Clearly

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V: It's true. All right, now I want to talk a little bit about um, your experiences, your of normalcy.

personal experiences, in your house. You said you were currently living in Oceanport, and that you actually saw some devastation yourself. Can you go into that a little bit?

M: Well, when I finally got home, which was probably five days after the storm, I went in, and I know that my house had had some, had had damage. My father was there the day after the storm, and he let me know that we had a significant amount of water damage to our house. So when I finally got to go into the house, it was really, you know, no words could describe how much damage actually happened, you know, they estimated at least three, three and a half, feet of water was in our one story house. All our furniture had to be thrown at the curb, because it was damaged, and our clothes and shoes were put into bags, because it was all waterlogged with the river water and from the storm surge. So, unfortunately some of my textbooks, from Monmouth, that I use to study were gone, they were lost in the river from the storm surge. So, just seeing all your personal belongings at the curb just shows you that, you know, [mean you have to be thankful that you're breathing and that you're living and well, but it's tough to see all your belongings and furniture and some of your clothes at the curb.

V: Definitely. And was that, how did that affect you during your work? Thinking of all the things, did you prepare your home before you left for work?

M: We did bring things in that we had in the garage, because we did anticipate maybe, at most an inch or two of water in our garage, because since the storm of '92 they said that's the furthest the water ever came up was to our garage. So, we did bring everything in. We had some files, some other additional boxes, and materials in the garage that we brought inside and elevated them on some blocks, but still was destroyed. But we did try to hunker down and do as much as we could to prepare for the storm.

V: And was that something you were thinking about while you were working, while you were away were you thinking, "Oh my God, my house must be totally under water? Did you not expect it to be as bad as it was when you saw it?"

M: I have a coworker that lives, that lived, in the same area as our house, and when he found out that he had six inches of water in his house, and he's further up the street from me, I realized, it was like, I can only imagine what my house is like if he has half a foot of water in his, and he's down the block. So, I knew that there had to be at least some damage, but I always said to myself, that's the stuff that can be replaced as long as my family and my friends are ok and safe, and I'm doing fine, then that's the only thing that really mattered at that time.

V: So what were you thinking when you first came home from work, after five days, you said, of hard police work in a disaster and now you have to clean out all your stuff. What was running through your head at that time?

M: Uh, it was definitely a sense of frustration, you know, because you get overwhelmed thinking of how much you have to do and not just pacing yourself and doing one thing at a time. You think of how you have to go out, find new furniture, clean your clothes, find a place to live, wait to get into permanent housing, but so it was overwhelming, that was definitely one of the, you know, major emotions running through my head at the time. But then, you know, it was great to do it with family, because, you know, we keep a positive attitude, we make jokes, we make the best out of every circumstance. So we did good, it was definitely helpful that we were all in it together.

V: It definitely worked?

M: Yes.

V: That's good. (Laughter) Now, where was your family during this time? Clearly

V: Ok, so you still remain optimistic?

M: Oh, you have to. There's no other way to be during this time.

V: It's true. All right, now I want to talk a little bit about um, your experiences, your

were gone?

M: Uh, I take six classes here, so, and I have two books for one class, so I have seven books that were lost, including six notebooks with some, you know, pertinent information, and power point slides, and all my notes from the class were in my little book cubby, I keep all my textbooks, were waterlogged and damaged.

V: And how has Monmouth helped you with that, if at all?

M: Most of, um, I'd say most of my professors did make accommodations. They were very understanding, very sincere, and they provided me with their own copy of their textbook, I have the instructor's manual to my Intro to Communication class, so she was, that professor was definitely the most helpful. And some people were offering me their help, if I ever need anything, email them. So you definitely felt that the professors became part of your family when they were notified of the devastation that I was a victim to.

V: Good, so you felt a sense of support from your academic community?

M: Definitely. The professors were definitely helpful, including some of the students

that I'm here with, they were telling me, they were actually asking me for my shirt size and if I needed sweatshirts or anything. So actually, I did actually, one day, was staying with a friend who lives off campus, who once they got power was asking me to stay. So, it was definitely helpful from the Monmouth community.

V: Does that change your view of the Monmouth community at all?

M: Urn, you know, President Gaffney always signs the emails "Hawks fly together" And you definitely saw that happen once the storm hit, you saw a tight knit family, you know, the close university, and I feel the President was very helpful too, organizing the, urn, the change in schedule, always keeping you updated. I think it was everyday we had a new email from him, keeping us updated. So, it was very helpful to know that the President all the way down to your professors were helping you out in any way.

V: Good. Now, has your experience as a student changed at all in terms of losing some of your notes and things? How have you been able to work, in the semester, on your actual work, your tests, your papers?

M: Right, once we got back into class, we gradually got back into the swing of things. And, you know, some of the professors allotted me, you know, if I need any extra time, just let them know. They were willing to give me some extra time on the assignments that were due close to the times we came back. So, you I definitely took advantage of some of the help that they gave me, but I felt like as soon as I got back into my academic state of mind, the quicker I was back into the swing of things. It was more quick, actually, coming back than it was coming back from the summertime into the fall semester. So I'd say now we're good, and getting ready to close out the semester on a strong note.

V: Good. Now I want to go back to your police work a little bit. What have your responsibilities been since the storm, and have things changed at all? Do you have more work than you would usually have at this time?

M: Uh yeah, definitely. We definitely have a lot more work than I would normally have in November/December time. The main responsibility I had, now that the storm is past, was making sure that, urn, no residents try to see the damage down by the boardwalk, because the boardwalk is completely destroyed. You know some of the structure is definitely weak, so it could easily collapse. And so we had to wait and make sure that everything wasn't touched so that the insurance adjustors to take a look at it, take their photographs. And aside from making sure nobody gets hurt on some of the debris, or tampers with any of the debris, we also had to make sure that nobody else takes advantage of the people that are without power, and are very subject to being a victim of property crimes, because we did have some people going and breaking into resident houses and business districts, and taking advantage of people without any alarm systems. So we had to go around and enforce seven A.M. to seven P.M. curfew. And if you saw anybody after seven P.M. they were subject to being stopped and questioned as to why they were out, and

even if they were in their car, we'd have to stop the vehicle and again conduct a field interview to find out why they were out and inform them that there is a

curfew, because, you know, some people, at the beginning, didn't know about the curfew. And then, again, some people were out trying to take advantage of people and their property.

V: And what was that like, trying to enforce that without having any power? And how did you know about these, about this, looting when there were no alarms to inform the police?

M: Right, well, thankfully we did have some concerned citizens that were still staying in their houses, and they would always call the police when they saw, you know, people with flashlights out their windows, or sometimes it would be residents of that house trying to find out what happened to their house, and other times it would be actually something, someone trying to break into the house. So, it was very helpful that people acted once they saw suspicious activity. And, um, once we got to investigate what was going on we made the determination of what we had to do. As well as, we had to get used to a change in venue, because our actual police headquarters was flooded with five inches of water, so we were operating out of the police headquarters, which is further down the block. So we were all make adaptations to what happened.

V: Yeah. Was that difficult? Or is that something that just happens pretty easily, it doesn't really matter where headquarters are?

M: Um, it seemed that it was a natural change. You know, thankfully our supervisors were on it, and they were doing a great job of organizing, you know, certain communication areas, and areas for food, areas for rest. So, it was definitely well organized and well equipped with what we had to work with.

V: Good, ok. Now where have you been staying since the storm hit?

M: Currently, I'm still staying at my grandparents', in West Long Branch with my mother and father, and my dog, and my grandparents' dog. They actually have two dogs, and a rabbit. And, uh, it's a two bedroom house, but we are making do.

V: It definitely worked?

M: Yes.

V: That's good. (Laughter) Now, where was your family during this time? Clearly

V: Ok, so you still remain optimistic?

M: Oh, you have to. There's no other way to be during this time.

V: It's true. All right, now I want to talk a little bit about um, your experiences, your

does it feel like you're just visiting family?

M: Yeah, it definitely feels like we are visiting family, and uh, the hospitality is unbelievable from my grandmother. She makes sure I'm feed at least five to six meals a day, you know, with a normal portion size of course. No, it's not strange at all. It feels great to be with family, but obviously it's still nice to have your own place, so we are anxious to seek permanent shelter, uh,

permanent housing soon.

V: Good. Now, urn, have you seen that people have come together in the community more than you've seen in the past?

M: Oh, absolutely. The amount of volunteers for handing out water, handing out soup, or gathering clothes for people that lost everything, is tremendous. I know in my regular town of Oceanport we have a Facebook group, that I'm a part of, and just seeing how many people are willing to help, asking our councilor officials of what else they could do, and they're always acting on it, so you definitely see everyone coming together and being that helping hand.

V: Does that make you feel very proud to be where you are from ?

M: Yeah, you definitely, it's definitely the Jersey pride is kicking in a lot more, not that we needed any more, but you definitely feel this sense of New Jersey and smaller of your own community, becoming together. And it definitely makes you proud to know that you have a neighbor and people around you that care, honestly care, about you.

V: Yeah. Do you have any fears going back to the community, or does that sense of support make you feel strong about going ... ?

M: No, it definitely makes you want to go back to the community, because that's the type of community you want to live. You want to live in that environment where people are willing to help. So it's definitely a welcoming, a welcoming homecoming.

V: And what about, urn, in the police department? Have you felt that same sense of support from surrounding towns? Or are you isolated in your work?

M: Uh, we definitely had a lot of help from other agencies. We actually worked with a police officer who came all the way from Mississippi willing to help. So we had state police officers from every state, we had New Jersey State Police Officers, we actually worked closely with the National Guard, and again they were willing to help in any way possible. And my regular coworkers at Long Branch, once they found out that [had personal damage to my house, they, I had several offers of shelter, of clothes, food, anything. So it was definitely nice to know that you are working with people too, so just like the town, it's nice to work with people that care for you.

V: Exactly. And do you see that that's something that's being maintained or is it slowly wearing off after the storm has subsided?

M: Uh yeah I feel like we, I feel like at the department you are always a family, and in a regular family you see, when times are tough, you see that family step up and become even closer. So, I mean, I don't think it will ever wear off, but [mean, it's just more intense when you are going through something tough.

V: And do you see any regrets in the police department? Anything that they wish they had done differently?

M: Urn, you obviously wish that nobody had to be subject to some of the damage that, uh, they went through. So, I'm pretty sure that our Office of Emergency Management is going to go back to the drawing board and see what they could have done with the infrastructure of the boardwalk as well as the evacuation zone, which was obvious, it was different than Irene. So, they changed it for this storm, so we're just going to have to see if they change it, hopefully not anytime soon, but in case another natural disaster was, is predicted to hit this area.

V: It definitely worked?

M: Yes.

V: That's good. (Laughter) Now, where was your family during this time? Clearly

V: Ok, so you still remain optimistic?

M: Oh, you have to. There's no other way to be during this time.

V: It's true. All right, now I want to talk a little bit about, um, your experiences, your

V: Yeah, it makes you appreciate the little things.

M: Absolutely, definitely.

V: Now, uh, you mentioned you lost some of your books, how many of your books

V: Good. Have you become closer as a family since this?

M: Absolutely! I think there was no choice in the matter. (Laughter)

about within the police department? What was their greatest triumph?

M: Urn, definitely my special units that I described before, of the water rescue. We have one officer that takes a lot of pride in his ability to maneuver in water, and he's a lifeguard when he's not a police officer, so he's very familiar with the environment. So he's, you could definitely tell that he felt proud of helping all the people he helped, which was a lot during the storm.

V: Ok that's great. And what have you learned? Any specific skills that you didn't have before as a policeman, that now after the storm you feel confident in?

M: I definitely feel confident now with keeping my composure, because this is definitely one of the most difficult, urn, things that I had to deal with while working as a police officer. So, I definitely felt the confidence and composure kick in when you could see other people around you, mainly non-first responders, not really handling it as well. So, I'm very confident in my way to, a way to stay calm and just render care and help whenever, and wherever people need it.

V: Urn hum. Now have you lost a lot of people that thought they were going to be police officers that now say, "I don't think so?"

M: Urn, I did see maybe one or two people question whether or not they have confidence in their ability, but again, I felt a lot more people have the same mentality as me in how they really stepped up to the plate and did a great job with answering to the toughness.

V: Um hm. That's good. Now I want to talk about the shelter as well, and your experiences in the shelter, because I know there's a lot of people out there who have never been to one and hope that they never have to be at one. So, can you tell me, what was that like? Was there a sense of fear

there? Were people pretty calm?

M: It was, urn, you definitely felt people were uneasy once they were in the shelter. Especially when you have twenty to thirty National Guard members running around in their army gear, which is kind of intimidating when you first see that. And when you see people coming in looking the way they are, you could see the emotion on their face and the stress they went through. And when you see all that, and just knowing that they lost how much stuff they lost, it's just, it's very sad to see, and I can only imagine what people who don't see things like that everyday were feeling. And, you know, they did try to do the best they could with accommodating as many people as they wanted, but you have to keep in mind that the Long Branch Middle School was not set up to be a permanent shelter, it was only supposed to be a reception center to be transported to the MAC here at Monmouth. So, they did make do, they had, urn, inflatable rafts that they used as temporary mattresses; they had blankets that people use for camping. So they had the supplies, but I'm sure people would like to see a lot more done, but, you know, they had to improvise, adapt and overcome for the situation that we were dealing with.

V: Right. Now was that prepared before the storm came or was that after people realized how bad it was?

M: Uh, they had those materials because for Hurricane Irene that was a permanent shelter, but I think the state has laws that the, that that school is too close to the coast, so it couldn't be used as a permanent shelter it had to be used as a reception shelter. So, they did have the supplies ahead of time, and that reception center was open the day before, the evening before the storm was predicted to make landfall, so they did have everything ready to go for what they needed.

V: It definitely worked?

M: Yes.

V: That's good. (Laughter) Now, where was your family during this time? Clearly

V: Ok, so you still remain optimistic?

M: Oh, you have to. There's no other way to be during this time.

V: It's true. All right now I want to talk a little bit about um, your experiences, your responsibility to try to calm people down? Did you have to maintain composure so that they did? Did anything cross your mind?

M: Right. You definitely have to, you know, spread the emotion of, you know, everybody, you know, be calm, you know, it's only temporary. You have to urge people not to panic because once you see one person panic, it's infectious everybody else starts to panic. Especially the way you carry yourself, because if you see a person in uniform, it's the significance of authority and, you know, they know what to do. So if you see somebody of that stature and figure with panic on their face, then you say well if he's nervous [should be nervous because he's a police officer, he's supposed to know what to do in this situation. So, it's very important to be, to maintain that positive and composed

attitude so you can pass that along to the people who are staying at the shelter.

V: Urn hm. Did you, now you' re only twenty, were you always this mature in your police work or has this matured you?

M: Absolutely. I definitely believe that becoming, in such a serious and, profession has definitely matured me, because I like to have my fair share of fun (Laughter). But definitely having this as my profession helped me mature a lot quicker than normal twenty year olds.

V: Yeah, because things you're saying a lot of twenty year olds, a lot of people a lot older, would not be able to do. Now is there anything else that you learned from this experience as a person, as a student, as a son? Anything that's important to you that you' ll maintain going forward?

M: The one thing I'll take away from such a devastating event is, you know, I loved how I saw everybody come together in a tough time. Because you don't really see that everyday, you always see people have the mentality that they are always out for themselves, but you did not see anything remotely close to that when the storm hit. You always saw somebody helping or giving someone else a hand. And that was really nice to see for a change, and it was really great to know that in case of another emergency you have people that you can rely on.

V: That is good to know. And do you have any hopes for the Shore going forward in its rebuilding process? That you see?

M: Uh, we just have to stay strong and patient, and it will definitely become a better and stronger place, because they are already out there, they're working, and cleaning up, and they're already starting the rebuilding phase. So it's going to, it's only going to get better. That's what you have to see. It can't get worse, it can only get better.

V: Yeah, that's true. And what about at Monmouth? As an academic community? Do you think this has strengthened it?

M: Urn, it definitely showed how Monmouth is ready to act and adapt to certain situations. You know, you don't really expect your school to know what to do in a tough time, such as a super storm like Sandy, so when you saw how quick they responded and how well they got us back to normalcy, it's, it's really comforting to know.

V: And in your Criminal Justice classes have you discussed at all how to deal with this kind of trauma or has it been incorporated in your classes?

M: Urn, not as much in my Criminal Justice classes. We have talked about it in some other classes, of, you know, what we take away from what we saw in the storm and what we saw, and how we could apply it to our classroom. But, not really to the Criminal Justice classes that I'm taking right now.

V: Ok. Good. Is there anything else that you wanted to talk about before we end the interview?

V: It definitely worked?

M: Yes.

V: That's good. (Laughter) Now, where was your family during this time? Clearly

V: Ok, so you still remain optimistic?

M: Oh, you have to. There's no other way to be during this time.

V: It's true. All right now I want to talk a little bit about um your experiences your

of a negative, and, you know you learn, it's similar to how you learn from your mistakes. You learn from a natural disaster and you move forward, and you carry on.

V: Thank you T.J.

M: Thank you Christin.