

Date of Interview: December 1st, 2020

Interviewee: Brielle Pett, Monmouth Class of 2020

Interviewer: Gillian Demetriou

Transcriber/Summarizer: Gillian Demetriou, Monmouth University Student

Brielle Pett was born in 1997 in Bergen County, New Jersey. She grew up in Palisades Park, New Jersey and comes from a single parent household with her mom. For most of her education she attended catholic schools and was very involved in athletics, particularly varsity track. While applying to colleges, she was being scouted by a few different schools on the East Coast for track scholarships but, in her senior year of high school, she tore her ACL. This caused her to lose her scholarships and she was unable to return to the sport. She said that she did not want to return to the sport because she would not be at the same level of intensity that she was prior to her injury. Her major reasons for picking Monmouth included its proximity to her home and to the beach, and how beautiful Monmouth's campus is. Additionally, her original major was social work, which Monmouth has a very good program for. She also said that the environment on the Monmouth University campus felt more like a home to her than any other schools she had visited or applied to, which was very important to her.

Brielle described her transition from high school to college as initially being a disaster. In high school she had been used to a strict athletic schedule. In college without the additional structure provided by athletics she struggled her first semester with time management. Additionally, she was living in a forced triple in Mullaney Hall, which was a drastic change for her. She was used to living as an only child and the close quarters with two random people was a very new and trying experience for her. Brielle began as a psychology major, and then switched to social work, and finally settled on health studies because of its broad nature. She has ambitions of being a nurse and she feels she can bring a positive and helpful attitude to the profession, as well as the expertise she has gotten from her education at Monmouth.

Her freshman year she went to the involvement fair and signed up for multiple clubs, specifically Greek life, the pre-physical therapy club, and the outdoors club. Her main social activity ended up being Greek life after she went through the formal recruitment process the second semester of her freshman year. She missed the team aspect of her high school experience and therefore decided to join AST. She joined AST because of the way the girls presented themselves as genuine people and they were accepting of everyone. She really enjoyed being in a sorority because it forced her to go out of her comfort zone and forced her to talk to people she would not have otherwise interacted with. She also enjoyed the fact that she always had someone to hang out with. The girls she met in her sorority came from all different economic, political, and religious backgrounds, which she said helped to broaden her own worldview.

Brielle applied to be a Resident Assistant in the second semester of her sophomore year. While the free room and board was a plus, Brielle enjoyed helping people solve problems, developing her leadership skills, and taking on challenges. She enjoyed her time being in a freshman building because she liked helping them with their questions. Brielle found the freshmen population interesting because they do not quite yet understand the rules of campus when they first arrive, so she felt it was her job to guide them and help them through their own transition period. The following year she lived in a sophomore dorm and while the experience was different, it was still satisfying. Brielle found this to be a valuable experience.

In her spare time, Brielle and her friends enjoyed going to local shops. They also enjoyed watching movies and exploring the surrounding areas like Asbury Park and Long Branch. Additionally, the AMC at the Monmouth Mall offered five-dollar movie Tuesdays, which they attended quite frequently.

Brielle had many positive experiences with the faculty at Monmouth, one of the most important to her being Dr. Hrycencko. Dr. H, as Brielle called her, taught a class in alternative and complementary health therapies and helped Brielle get an internship her senior year. She had her internship at a hospice care facility in Wall Township. She recalls this as an extremely interesting and powerful experience. Her experiences with patients at the end stage of their lives was both challenging and enlightening.

In March her senior year Brielle's college experience was upended by the COVID-19 pandemic. In her own words, Brielle said that this "punched her college experience right in the face." The rest of her senior semester was conducted online. Additionally, there was no positive closure with friends, faculty, or environments that had been so vital to her college experience and her growth over the previous years. She plans on going to nursing school, and applying to an accelerated BSN program. Her goal is to complete her nursing schooling by 2022 and to be pursuing job opportunities in the nursing field, in the hopes of becoming a nurse practitioner.