

Date of Interview: December 6th, 2020

Interviewee: Omar Abdelmoneim

Interviewer: Vincent Sauchelli

Transcriber/Summarizer: Vincent Sauchelli, Monmouth University Student

00:03 Lead

- Interviewer introduces the project

00:55 Narrator introduces himself

- Narrator provides a brief, basic background of himself

01:40 What year are you in at Monmouth, what is your degree?

- Health studies major, technically a senior, this is sixth year in college

02:40 What was the most shocking or surprising aspect about pursuing your degree?

- Always wanted to work in medical field so was not really shocked
- Learned how to believe in himself pursuing this degree as well as his capabilities

03:00 So you've learned a bit about yourself here at Monmouth along with health studies?

- He learned about his capabilities and not to doubt himself and to challenge himself to want more out of himself

03:40 What do you like most about pursuing your degree?

- Money and benefits is an aspect, but being able to help people is what matters the most

04:30 What do you like least about pursuing your degree?

- The tediousness of the degree and the amount of work required

05:00 If you were in charge of the program would you change anything?

- Would require less of a focus on the seminar and more on internship and hands-on experience

06:10 Have you been a student at Monmouth since you were a freshman?

Transferred to Monmouth from Brookdale Community College

06:40 What was it like being a student at Brookdale compared to now at Monmouth?

- You do not get the "college experience" at a school like Brookdale
- Living on campus, getting to know roommates, Greek life and clubs
- Brookdale was depressing, like an extension of high school in regard to the atmosphere

08:15 When you came to Monmouth did you get involved in Greek life, clubs, extracurriculars?

- Started extracurriculars, wish he got here sooner but he chose to stay behind for other people
- Greek life was suspended so he could not experience Greek life as much as he wanted to
- Not much time to join clubs with the amount of work but got to participate in some extracurriculars

09:55 How did Brookdale prepare you to be successful at Monmouth?

- Did not care much about studying at Brookdale, like in high school, did not do much work and was failing classes at first

- Brookdale did not set him up for anything but allowed him to learn how to take school more seriously,
- He found desire to keep pushing within himself

11:45 What made you want to move on from Brookdale to Monmouth?

- There was a mix of motivation
- Mostly his family, they are all educated with degrees, as well as gaining more knowledge

13:50 Do you have any younger siblings that have been inspired by you going to college?

- Little brothers look up to him but are on their own paths
- His little sister sees how seriously he takes school, she is motivated by his work ethic to become a doctor too
- This is incentive for him to keep pushing

15:38 What do you think it will mean to your family to see you graduate college?

- Two of his cousins are doctors, other family members work in finance
- It is not an easy accomplishment becoming a doctor and this will make his family proud of him, especially his mother, which will make him proud as well

17:30 How many credits did you have when you came to Monmouth or what academic year were you in?

- Had sixty credits, technically going into junior year
- Was unsure of what he wanted to do at Brookdale, psychology, business, computer science, decided on biology but could not handle it
- Ended up becoming health studies major and it worked out for him

18:45 How did you find your way to health studies? What led you there and convinced you that it was for you?

- Always wanted to do something health related
- Keeping the goal of helping people in mind
- Health studies was an easier option on his stress levels and mental health

20:10 It might be safe to say it spoke to you more?

- Became accustomed to the health studies major quickly

20:37 What made you choose to come to Monmouth as opposed to another institution?

- It was mainly friends that attracted him to Monmouth
- Saw his friends loving the university
- Close to home, nice balance close to home and meeting new people from different places

21:50 So you seem like you have had a pretty good experience at Monmouth?

- So far, it has been awesome

21:57 Has Monmouth lived up to expectations, not lived up to expectations, or been something different from what you expected?

- Expectations for Monmouth were high
- Wanted to have the college experience but unfortunately came a little too late
- Could not dorm, people already had groups, it was hard to meet people and go out, this was a bit of a letdown that could have made his experience better

23:11 What would you tell students as to why they should come to Monmouth?

- People should follow their heart
- College is a once in a lifetime experience, hopes that people understand this and they make the most of it
- Emphasized that with the experience, school work is just as important

25:00 That is definitely a good message to give to people.

- We have one life, one college experience, people have to do it the right way, you make lifelong friends while at college
- Experience is the most important aspect that progresses people in life

26:10 Have you ever lived on campus, close by, or commuted from home?

- Lived off campus, nearby in Deal
- Did not have someone behind him telling him what to do, had to learn how to be more responsible but it was necessary

27:15 You lived by Monmouth your whole time as a student here?

- Lived by Monmouth for one year
- Felt like he could not afford living near campus, could not find people to live with

27:55 What has it been like commuting from home? How is that different from living nearby?

- It was easier living by school, student center and library were close by and more accessible, commuting from home made these resources farther away
- Was always in the student center, studying and getting work done

29:19 Would you say you have a preference between living nearby or at home and why is your preference what you prefer?

- Would prefer to live near campus
- Always had a place to stay near school, but did not want to feel like a burden to people
- It was easier living on his own and having access to school resources

30:21 How did the schedule change affect you from Brookdale to Monmouth? Easy or difficult? And was there anything you had to drastically change once coming to Monmouth?

- Felt like teachers at Brookdale were not challenging him, they did not take things seriously
- Brookdale was super easy but needed more of a challenge
- Monmouth was more of a challenge but also a bit complicated, it was a big adjustment to get used to

32:00 How do professors at Monmouth compare to those you describe from Brookdale?

- Professors at Monmouth took their jobs more seriously
- Enjoyed being with professors who are passionate about what their teaching
- Recalls how a chemistry professor at Monmouth would always be happy to help, this pushed him further to take things seriously as he did not want to let professors down

34:00 How many classes are you taking this semester?

- Due to less classes required, taking four classes now and four next semester
- Five classes can be a little rough, balancing work and maintaining grades

34:52 How does your schedule right now compare to other schedules you've had at Monmouth?

- Usually took five classes in a semester, one time took six and it was too much
- Students should be full time, but take only what they could handle

36:00 Have you taken summer or winter courses? How do those compare to a typical semester?

- Has taken summer classes, at most three
- Main difference is six weeks as opposed to fourteen, there is more work to do in less time

37:00 Have you also had to balance working with school? If so, how and what kind of jobs?

- At first had a summer job as an ice cream man, made money to last throughout the school year
- Now had to balance boxing hobby, diet, and working in an old people's home
- Boxing was a good distraction from stress, and working old people's home is for experience in health studies

39:30 How does the work you're doing now fit your major and prepare you for your future?

- Job is to help people, these are not ordinary people, they have dementia, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's
- This job is difficult but prepares him for the variety of people he will work with in a hospital
- This job teaches him to have patience by dealing with elderly people who have health conditions

41:30 Do you plan on going on to further your education after Monmouth?

- Looking into medical programs outside the country
- Looking into physician's assistant schools and nursing schools
- Going to med school requires big sacrifices and he willing to make them

43:00 Where is Saint Kitts? How did you find interest in this place?

- Saint Kitts is in the Caribbean
- Cousins went to school there, they loved it, this relates to his ideology about the experience of school

43:45 How has COVID affected your education at Monmouth University?

- At first he thought he would love taking class at home
- Being at home makes him lazy and distracted easily
- Needs to be present in class to learn best

45:00 How has hands-on been affected by COVID?

- Hand-on learning such as labs are more difficult now
- You really need to be present in lab to learn best
- Sees his friends struggling with their labs

45:50 What is most difficult about school during COVID?

- Distractions, there is so much going on
- Wants to spend time with family and does not want to miss out

46:20 How do you cope with distractions?

- It is hard with the lack of resources such as the student center
- Will study with friend who live close by to campus but not so much to avoid getting sick

47:15 Talking about pre-COVID times, what were some challenges then, and how did you cope with them?

- When he did not understand things he would freak out
- Sitting down with professor during office hours was helpful but cannot do that now
- Needs to be present and near the professor to learn better

48:15 So you're kind of at a disadvantage now?

- Yes, a big disadvantage, could get work done in the student center but distractions at home can be too much

48:40 What would you say about the COVID protocol that has been implemented on campus?

- Likes how the President of Monmouth is taking the pandemic seriously
- Thinks he is doing a great job, as well as teachers who are teaching remotely

49:40 Would you change anything about the protocol?

- No, reiterate how the President is doing a great job
- Closing down when necessary and keeping students in the loop

50:00 Is there anything you would like to add that you forgot who felt was not addressed?

50:30 Narrator adds his final remarks

- First, do not stay behind in life for other people, go to college for you
- Staying behind for ex-girlfriend and not getting college experience was not worth it in his opinion

50:54 - 50:57 (Video Lag)

- When you are going to college, do it for you, other people will stay in your life if they are meant to
- Follow your heart and follow your dreams, let nothing or nobody hold you back, even if people mean the world to you
- Second, take every second to appreciate the university and its resources
- Professors, student centers, small college where it is easy to make friends who might last a lifetime
- Lastly, take college seriously, get work done then have fun

52:30 Thank you to the Narrator

- Interviewer thanks narrator, on behalf of self, Oral History Independent Study and Monmouth Memories Oral History Program for time and effort today
- Narrator thanks interviewer for allowing him to participate
- Interviewer praises the great participant that the Narrator has been throughout the interview process