**COVID-19 IMPACT SHORT WRITING**

The impact of COVID-19 on my journey towards medical school has been far-reaching and multi-faceted. Academically, the shift to online coursework from 2019 to 2022 presented numerous challenges. Limited class sizes and reduced course offerings made securing enrollment in prerequisite classes difficult. I explored various colleges for available spots that aligned with my financial considerations, attending nearby institutions to reduce transport costs.

Adapting to the virtual learning environment brought its own hurdles. The absence of in-person interactions with professors impacted my academic performance, particularly in prerequisite courses where direct engagement was crucial. Lab classes added to the challenge, considering transportation costs. Attending nearby colleges helped mitigate these challenges.

Professionally, the pandemic hindered part-time employment prospects. The competitive job market and financial constraints faced by businesses, including medical offices, made finding a job arduous. I relied more on student loans for financial support. In-person physician shadowing plans were canceled due to restrictions, but I proactively sought alternative options. Through YouTube and Google, I discovered virtual shadowing experiences in various medical specialties, completing certificates for shadowing hours. While not as immersive as in-person shadowing, these experiences provided valuable insights into healthcare professionals' dedication and patient care during the pandemic.

Personally, I made the difficult decision to relocate to a more affordable living space, reducing financial strain and COVID-19 exposure risk. Prioritizing my well-being supported my academic pursuits.

Overall, COVID-19 deepened my commitment to medical school. I learned resilience and adaptability, solidifying my dedication to providing compassionate care. These lessons from an unpredictable time, combined with virtual shadowing experiences, will shape my future as a physician.