



1                                   **Transcription**

2                                   **Interview with Makeda Duncan**

3                                   **Interviewed by Jay'La Sims**

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5       Jay'La Sims: So, this is capturing student life during quarantine. Um, I am Jayla Sims. It is  
6       may 4th and it is 5:06pm

7  
8       Makeda Duncan: I'm Makeda Duncan. Hi.

9  
10      JS: Yeah. So just going to get into it, I guess.

11  
12      JS: Where did you grow up?

13  
14      MD: I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, I've lived here my whole life.

15  
16      MD: When I was little I lived in the North center neighborhoods like around Wrigleyville ,  
17      Lakeview , like a little pocket in that region. Um, Yeah, I grew up in that area. I lived with my  
18      mom and my brother. I have five siblings and I have one full blood brother and that's who I  
19      lived with at that apartment.

20  
21      JS: Nice.

22  
23      JS: Have you always lived in the same neighborhood?

24  
25      MD: Uh no when I was 12 I moved out of that apartment. I lived in with my mom and brother it  
26      was like a two bedroom little place. My mom was like, okay my kids are, you know, they're  
27      growing older they need their privacy. My mom got her master's degree in teaching. When I  
28      was in like kindergarten. So she was also just like stable in her career she bought a house. So  
29      now we live in, Gailwood, it's on the west side of Chicago kind of within the Austin  
30      neighborhood next to Oakwood Park and Oak Park.

31  
32      JS: Could you describe what Gailwood is like?

33  
34 MD: Um a lot of these houses were built in the 20s, 30s, my house was built, I want to say in  
35 like 1929 or something. 27 -- There's a lot of like bungalow style houses with the like  
36 geometrical front, there's like five or six windows stained glass, stuff like that. It's a really  
37 pretty neighborhood. I love the architecture. I'm kind of an architecture nerd.

38  
39 JS: Where was your high school located?  
40

41 MD: Um, I went to Lane Technical College Prep high school. It's a Chicago public high  
42 school that's on the quarter Edison and Western. It's funny, I went to elementary school like  
43 four blocks away from where I went to high school, but in high school I didn't live in that  
44 neighborhood anymore, so it was a commute, but I love Lane Tech.

45  
46 JS: Could you describe what Lane tech is like?  
47

48 MD: It's very, um, It's hard to like pinpoint because it was a pretty big mix of people because it's  
49 a selective enrollment school. So there's like the system for high schoolers. Take the exam and  
50 get into these special public schools, that's a whole nother conversation, but it was very diverse.  
51 We had dance clubs for cultural -- Like they call the international week or international days  
52 like dance with your team. There was so many sports teams. I was in theater and choir. We had  
53 awesome programs. It was a very unique school. I loved it.

54  
55 JS: What was the size of your graduating class?  
56

57 MD: I know like Lane in total has like 6,000 kids around there 5,000- 6,000. My graduating  
58 class think it was like people who actually got to walk if they weren't in trouble.

59  
60 JS: (laughter)  
61

62 MD: Probably 900 kids, but I think we had at least 1,000 in our grade almost every grade had  
63 1,000.  
64

65 JS: What were your expectations when you graduated high school?

66 MD: Um, I kind of knew that I was going to be living in Chicago, because of Columbia,  
67 because I always wanted to go there for my major. I was expecting more independence. I was  
68 ready to like do things by myself because I lived on campus my first year at Columbia. I was  
69 expecting making new friendships and definitely getting sad about missing my friends , but I  
70 was just really excited to figure it out later like, like, once I was there to learn all that stuff.

71  
72 JS: So what were your ambitions, when you graduated?  
73

74 MD: Hmm. The summer after senior year of high school, I was just like, I didn't know what to  
75 expect, but I was really excited. I was excited to go to Columbia. To meet more creative people  
76 and more artists and musicians and creators. Yeah, I wanted to start a band. I had a band for a  
77 little bit. We played a few gigs together. Good times. Um, but, as in relation to my major I was  
78 just ready to get back involved in the deaf community. I'm a sign language interpretation major  
79 and I grew up learning sign language and I didn't have very much of an opportunity in high  
80 school to stay involved with the deafcommunity. So I was really just excited to immerse myself  
81 in the language again and practice, I guess.

82  
83 JS: So why did you decide to attend Columbia College Chicago?  
84

85 MD Um, there aren't very many options for ASL interpretation in  
86 Illinois. Um, and the schools that you offer it. A lot of the programs have closed in recent years.  
87 So they were no longer an option to me. There's this one other option called MacMurray  
88 college and it was in the middle of nowhere and I've lived in Chicago, my whole life. I was like,  
89 I can't be bored in a cornfield in college, like I just couldn't see myself doing that. So I chose  
90 Columbia.

91  
92 JS: Tell me more about your major and how it intertwines with your daily life.

93  
94 MD: Hmm.  
95

96 MD: Well, I usually wake up in the morning like three at least three, three and a half hours  
97 before I have to go to school because it takes

98 me an hour and a half to get to school on public transportation one way. That's why-- So like,  
99 um, I guess I miss the routine of it. It sucks to like have the alarm go off, but it was a reason to  
100 get me out of bed like I liked making tutoring appointments so that I could like chat in ASL  
101 with a tutor. And then I would get up early and have motivation to go somewhere, you know, A  
102 lot of my routine was based around the fact that it took me so long to get to and from school.  
103 So if I wanted to do more things with my day. I would have to really plan accordingly.

104

105 JS: How well were you balancing classes before they were interrupted?

106

107 MD: I think this semester, I realized that I'd be challenged in a way that I haven't been before at  
108 Columbia, because I'm starting my interpreting classes now. I don't know every semester has  
109 been different. And I think this one. Right before school shut down. I was getting really  
110 overwhelmed and nervous for midterms. A lot of stuff to do. And I was like, Oh my gosh, I  
111 wish this could stop. And then, lo and behold, it was kind of like, once I put it into perspective. I  
112 was like, I get that I was stressed out then, but now I'm like I didn't know anything then.

113

114 JS: Describe what your classes are like

115 MD: Currently?

116 JS: Before.

117 MD: Okay, um,

118 JS: Or both.

119 MD: Before, my major the ASL department is located at 33 Ida B. Wells. So I would go to that  
120 building Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday this semester. I only had classes three days a  
121 week. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, I'd be there for sure. And then Wednesdays I had our oral  
122 history class at the 624 building. And I worked at the student center.

123 So between those three buildings that's where I would spend like most of my time. Classes were  
124 pretty normal. They made sense. I like how Columbia has small classes. And in the ASL  
125 department specifically all the tables face each other so we can see each other. And I like  
126 having that connection with people. Um Columbia's really friendly and even in our class or oral  
127 history class like people are cool to chat with. Even if you don't know them, like we get to know  
128 each other, respectively.

129  
130 JS: What was your job on campus? [yelling in background]  
131

132 MD: I work at the brand new student center. It was unveiled and freshly built. -- The Fall  
133 semester of 2019, so this was my second semester working there. So all school year. Um,  
134 but now we can't really work there at the moment.  
135

136 JS: You explain your job and the tasks that it involves.  
137

138 MD: Um, yes. So the Student Center was built for events and student activity to go on. So we  
139 would set up rooms like big event spaces and even small meeting rooms with the necessary  
140 resources that students and faculty need to have a successful meeting just like setting up  
141 chairs, tables, layouts, um, So yeah, we're just kind of a behind the scenes crew. But when  
142 everything stopped or before all the classes were shut down and Corona was being discussed.  
143 Everyone was like Worried about being paid. That was like the biggest issue then. Still is now  
144 I suppose.

145  
146 JS: Tell me about your social life at Columbia.  
147

148 MD: Um, since moving and living back home, um, social life is different than like my freshman  
149 year where I was constantly surrounded by people in the dorm. I do get to see friends who have  
150 like their own place. A lot of my social life revolves around just like a small group of people.  
151 But definitely this year, it kind of minimized compared to last year I was definitely more of a  
152 social butterfly.

153 JS: How was your mental health, while you were on campus?  
154

155 MD: I felt really cool. I was like a freshman in college and I was like yeah independence, you  
156 know, and then again, sometimes I'd be like, Oh my God, I'm an adult now this is I'm alone,  
157 like I'm out in this world by myself, what do I do, you know, um, I feel like there was more  
158 good than bad when I was on campus, though.

159  
160 JS: How did you deal with those fears of adulthood while on campus?  
161

162 MD: I-- It's really hard for me not to worry about the future. I guess that's like my big hang up.  
163 But just remembering that I have important people in my life that aren't going anywhere.  
164 You know, like your location can change but your relationships with people are what they  
165 are, you know.  
166

167 JS: What were some of the things you were looking forward to in the spring semester of  
168 2020  
169

170 MD: Hmm. Well, I was really fortunate. Actually, I went to a few conferences in February,  
171 right before everything kind of shut down. Like ASL conferences about black deaf culture.  
172 Because there is an under representation of the black community and I want to learn more  
173 about the black community, the black deaf community. So, I was lucky that the big events I  
174 was looking forward to happen right before all this went down. I didn't really have much  
175 planned. My birthday is coming up, though. My birthday is in May so I will have a  
176 quarantine birthday.  
177

178 JS: When did you first become aware of the coronavirus?  
179

180 MD: Um, I remember being at work and hearing people joke about it like make like small  
181 passing jokes about it. Um, I saw it on social media and stuff. I was like, Oh, man. There's a lot  
182 of people getting sick in China. Okay. Then I went to an ASL event Black Death advocates of  
183 Illinois. They had a presentation about diabetes and coronavirus so they wanted to spread  
184 information in ASL. So we talked about cause of diabetes and then coronavirus came up and  
185 people were asking questions like, can I still take the bus, and is it safe. So that's when I was

186 starting to figure out about it more and more. That was in like February, early  
187 February.

188

189 JS: What was your reaction to learning more about it?

190

191 MD: As February went on. I just, I felt really paranoid when I had to take the bus on the train  
192 to school. I was really cognizant of it working at the student center. My managers started  
193 telling us to like-- wipe the surfaces down at the front desk of the student center to wipe them  
194 every few hours. So I became more aware of, like, the health precautionary stuff.

195

196 JS: When. Where were you when you learned Columbia was transitioning to online learning?

197

198 MD: I was actually at work. I got the email before any of my co workers and managers Got it.  
199 Which was kind of interesting, and then We were all like sent it like several times. So I like  
200 forwarded it to my managers and they came down from their office on the second floor. And  
201 they're like, what, how did you get this , where is this from. So Columbia's information  
202 spreading was a little slow for some people, but we were like, I was talking with another co  
203 worker, and we were both we've agreed that a lot of our other friends who went to like state  
204 schools and public schools they had already been out of school for a few days. By the time we  
205 got our closing notice, so I thought It was only probably like three or four days, but it still  
206 resonated with me. I was like, why did we wait so long.

207

208 JS: Describe your reaction to classes transitioning to online learning.

209

210 MD: Whoo boy. Well, we had they sent the email in April, and then no not April. March they  
211 sent the email in March. And they told us that school would start again April 6th. So we had  
212 like an extended break and during that time I had some teachers reach out and say, like, thank  
213 you for being patient like we're we're working on the online stuff right now. Please. -- Continue  
214 to do whatever assignments or something. The school said don't worry about assignments for a  
215 certain



216 amount of time. But they still reached out like some of them said, in order to stay on track can  
217 you please do this assignment. And I was like, okay, that's fine, whatever. But some teachers  
218 didn't have that communication and that kind of frustrated me.

219  
220 JS: What were your concerns?  
221

222 MD: Um, Well, my major revolves heavily around interpersonal connection and sometimes we  
223 have, like, um, like deaf blind socials and you can't communicate with a deaf blind person if  
224 you're not directly in front of them doing like tactile sign language. And just, there's a lot of  
225 nuances of deaf culture and deaf like community ethics that revolve around being face to face  
226 with the person Um, but at the same time, a lot of our assignments are online. We upload videos  
227 of ourselves as homework because you can't really like write it on a piece of paper and submit it  
228 you know , so I was a little relieved. In that sense, that I was comfortable with the online stuff  
229 already. Because we, we relied on it.

230  
231 JS: Would you prefer to be going to school during a pandemic why or why not  
232

233 MD: Oh boy. Absolutely not. I'm staying home. Every time I go to the grocery store with my  
234 mom. I feel like I'm looking around like darting my eyes because who's around me stay back,  
235 um, Although it really sucks that we're in this situation. I wouldn't want to be around people,  
236 especially because Colombia's first confirmed case was in the building that I'm in every day. So  
237 that was a little eerie like the first two weeks. I was like, all right, I'll see how my health is and  
238 thankfully I was okay. But I don't think I would want to stroll through 33 Ida B. Wells right  
239 now.

240  
241 JS: Yeah. Well, let me reword that would you prefer to be going to online school during  
242 all of this?  
243

244 MD: Um, Yeah, I mean, we've only been doing this for like five or six weeks and I'm already  
245 like not into it. I can't imagine doing like a whole semester of it.

246 JS: Just -- How did the announcement that the college would close impact your living  
247 situation?

248  
249 MD: I was lucky. I was not relocated. I'm living in my house with my mom and my brother. I  
250 wasn't living on campus this semester. So I was very thankful to not have to shift in that sense.

251  
252 JS: Describe your current living situation.

253 MD: Yep, just my mom, brother and I. It's a full size house. We have our own bedrooms and  
254 stuff but only my dog. But yeah, sometimes the house doesn't feel big enough for all of us,  
255 you know what I mean.

256  
257 JS: What was your parents reaction to classes returning online?

258  
259 MD: Um, well, my mom is actually a Elementary School teacher and she felt very nervous  
260 very unsure. She's not super, super tech savvy. So that was like her biggest concern  
261 immediately also because right around that time her job was starting to get more and more  
262 workload and stress and stuff. So my mom was like it is what it is we're going to do what we  
263 can. We're all going to be working in the house because my brother is, um he works in  
264 elementary schools as well. He's an in classroom special - special ed assistant. So we all had  
265 stuff we knew we had to do and just buckle up and do it.

266  
267 JS: What do you miss about being on campus?

268  
269 MD: I miss the structure. Just having a reason to get out of bed and get out early. Also, I'm a  
270 very environmentally aware person, I guess you could say like when I'm home. I'm kind of  
271 checked out. I do all my homework on campus at school. When I'm home, I want to chill, you  
272 know, and being able to go to school and like being an environment where I can have quiet time  
273 and like do stuff at the library. I really miss that.

274  
275 JS: What changes in your academic habits have you noticed, since going online?

276  
277 MD: I get random bursts of motivation. Like, I will be doing absolutely nothing in the middle  
278 of the day and then it's 11:30pm and

279 I'm like, I should be studious right now. I just like start working or sometimes it's hard to accept  
280 that there are days where like I do not want to even be near my laptop right now to do  
281 homework. I'm just going to chill. You know, so it's hard to figure out exactly what kind of  
282 schedule I'm on but we're doing it.

283  
284 JS: Tell me more about the way you study/complete work at home.

285  
286 MD: Um right now in a lot of my interpreting classes. Um, it's just like watching videos  
287 and interpreting. So I have like my iPad open recording myself and I'll have my phone in  
288 front of it, watching the video. So that helps. I do whenever I'm like writing my research  
289 theory. My theory research paper. I have to like sit at a table with my laptop open and like  
290 have tons of tabs so I feel like certain homework assignments I can do in my room and  
291 certain ones I need to like sit at a proper table and like really just crank it out. I try to not  
292 listen to music, though, because that distracts me.

293  
294 JS: How are you and your professors communicating?

295  
296 MD: This semester has probably been one of the trickiest for me with communication with my  
297 professors. I have a teacher for, I'm not going to see what class, but just my communication  
298 with them has not been super good. And then other teachers. I don't want to-- It's hard to  
299 express how you feel and an email when you're stressed out and stuff in this kind of situation.  
300 So I feel like sometimes I try to really think through what I want to send to them because I don't  
301 know, I might just be a sensitive person about texts and emails, but I want to seem professional,  
302 but also get my point across.

303  
304 JS: What has been the biggest struggle with classes being online?

305  
306 MD: Um, I feel like trying to get my questions answered is such a hassle. Like if I'm unsure  
307 about something, you gotta like email and feel like I don't want to inundate someone with  
308 constant like hey question, hey question, hey question like, I don't know when I have enough  
309 questions saved up in my head to like list them out and send

310 them. I don't want to feel annoying. But then at the same time, there are some weeks where  
311 teachers assign a lot and I will be happy to send an email and say, I haven't done this yet. I'm  
312 sorry. Please give me like an extra day. I just like need to. And I think that's weird because  
313 people say that all we have all the time in the world right now but it's hard to separate our  
314 activities in a timeline.

315  
316  
317 JS: Explain the differences in your online classes to the classes you had in person.  
318

319 MD: Um for my advanced ASL class my teacher is breaking us up into small groups. So instead  
320 of having the whole group on one zoom call he'll do the lesson for us and like groups of four  
321 or five And I think that it makes sense for ASL because it is a visual language. And when you're  
322 on zoom and you have all these boxes open it's hard to see everyone clearly and because it  
323 requires everyone to like look in the same direction. I've been in bigger zoom calls with ASL  
324 happening and it is kind of crazy. Um, I missed tutors. Just being able to chat with people  
325 because I don't have everyone's like contact information. I don't like call them. Because when  
326 we're in school. We're in the ASL center and it's all ASL students and people who know sign  
327 language, so you can just walk up to anybody and ask them a question but now, I feel a little  
328 disconnected from my peers, like we rely on that space to practice and use our ASL skills.

329  
330 JS: Tell me about the changes you think -- the changes that you think will take place when you  
331 return to your job on campus.  
332

333 MD: Well, earlier this year there were a lot of people getting sick, at my job and not so good  
334 personal hygiene was happening with some of my co-workers. So, I really hope that and also  
335 when coronavirus was beginning people would like huff and puff and roll their eyes about us  
336 having to clean off the front desk and stuff. So I hope that resonates with them because we were  
337 on a pretty bad streak about keeping things sanitary So I hope that changes.

338

339 JS: What are your news sources?

340

341 MD: Oh no, this is embarrassing. I wish I could say like a lot of reputable like the New York  
342 Times, but um I do watch CNN if my mom has it playing on the TV. I personally don't like seek  
343 out CNN or like any of the big news sources. I just get a lot of information from social media  
344 like Twitter or Instagram. But I'll watch CNN, like in passing, if I go past the living room.

345

346 JS: Explain how the news/social media has affected your thoughts at this time.

347

348 MD: Um, I, my mom was actually watching a special about like a coronavirus timeline, the  
349 other day, it was on CNN and they were showing information about how the government knew  
350 about the outbreak like in January in February and that kind of thing frustrates me. I'm like,  
351 what's going on, why is this all having to be so crazy when you have people that could have  
352 done something about it. But then there's like cutesy social media about it on Facebook and  
353 Instagram and all the neighbors are like putting we can do this signs up in their window like  
354 drawn by like five year olds. I think that's like the inspiration "inspiration porn". I'm putting air  
355 quotes around that I'm part of this pandemic, like the we're all in this together thing. There's like  
356 the negative scientific view. Oh, this is really bad. And then there's the humanity, neighbors,  
357 sunshine kind of part of it. That sounds really negative but that's just like a really general take  
358 of mine.

359

360 JS: How do you feel about the inspiration porn side of the news?

361

362 MD: I think it's it's cute in a certain way and like yes, we all do have to be strong and we all  
363 do have to be understanding of each other. That's really important in this certain this like  
364 time. Um, but I'm worried that it might not expose the whole picture of it. Of the situation  
365 like in future generations when they look back

366

367 JS: Describe how your social life has changed and what you do to keep in touch with your  
368 friends.

369 MD: Um, well, I used to see my boyfriend, like every day. Um and now I see him very seldom.  
370 I've only seen him a few times. And we can't like be around each other for a long period of time.  
371 He can't come in my house like we have to wear masks when we're near each other. And it's  
372 kind of sad. I've like driven past my friends houses and just like chatted from their porch. Yeah,  
373 I can't really see people so I'm Zooming and Facetiming, my friends, as much as possible,  
374 though.

375

376 JS: Who do you talk to about your concerns?

377

378 MD: My mom has been a really awesome support for me, even though she has so much stuff  
379 to worry about on her own as well also my best friend, Ashley. She's my cousin and we talk  
380 every day. So we kind of like vent our frustrations to each other.

381

382 JS: How do you deal with feelings of depression? What are some coping skills you use to deal  
383 with anxiety from the virus?

384

385 MD: Um, that's tough. Sometimes negative thoughts can just like linger just like that saboteur  
386 in your mind is just like trying to convince you that everything is bad and nothing has a  
387 solution, but I've been drawing a lot more. I draw. I'm not good at it, but it's fun. Um, I bought  
388 a pair of roller skates, and that has been motivating me a lot to like get out of the house and  
389 still get oxygen and you know exercise because I'm used to walking and moving around so  
390 much just getting from Campus to home and stuff like that. So, yeah.

391

392 JS: How has the pandemic changed your relationship to your parents?

393

394 MD: Um, I don't know if it's changed a whole lot with my mom. We just kind of like vent to  
395 each other more About how we feel and stuff. I guess it's a change, a good thing.

396

397 JS: Explain the precautions you and your family take to stop the spread of the virus.

398

399 MD: Well we all wear masks. I wash my hands a lot. We're not going near a lot of our  
400 neighbors. Just the normal stuff. Going to the store

as little as possible. Trying to stay in. My brother does break social distancing a little bit. I have broken social distancing but my brother, does it a lot.

JS: Describe your concerns for your friends, family members, health.

MD: I actually do have a friend who had it um she was studying abroad in London, and she came back and she was sick. I was worried about her for a while and then she recovered like totally. I'm concerned, though, about my mom because she has had pneumonia before, she's asthmatic, she's had a lot of surgeries, she's middle aged like I'm just worried about her more than anything. So like when my brother and I do go out, if we do go out or when she goes to the grocery store and stuff that does freak me out. But it's like, what can you do. There's certain things you have to do.

JS: What concerns do you have about the coronavirus in the future.

MD: I hope that um school isn't impacted too much. I don't know, it's just the lack of routine or lack of activity is kind of freaking me out. I hope that we can find science, scientists and researchers can find a way to make a vaccine for it because it's freaky how how fast it spreads and thinking about who in my life could get it or if I could get it in the future is kind of scary.

JS: Describe how you plan to go about life when we are released from the quarantine.

MD: Oh, I'm definitely going to be very cautious, still very much so. Um, I don't think I'm going to want to really eat out at restaurants or anything. I'm probably gonna still be really crazy

MD: Sorry, did it go out? My mom-

JS: Yeah it cut out after restaurants.

MD: Oh okay. Um, yeah, I wouldn't want to go to restaurants, be in public too much. I don't really think, if Lollapalooza is an option this summer I don't think that's something I would want to do as sad

434 as it sounds. I'm probably going to try to avoid concerts and big gatherings. Yeah.

435

436 JS: How do you think this virus will affect future interactions?

437

438 MD: I hope it's a wake up call for people to be more sanitary and cognizant of germs because  
439 we don't see them. So people forget about or ignore them. Also, just like I hope it makes people  
440 realize that when it's a pandemic, a global pandemic, it affects more than yourself and you have  
441 to think outside of yourself because staying home right now is not only benefiting the self, it  
442 benefits the whole which is the world. And as global citizens, we need to be a little less selfish  
443 sometimes I hope this teaches people will slow down and be a little less selfish.

444

445

446 JS: Describe how you will be changing your daily life after this

447

448 MD: Probably like the mask and glove thing really really just conscious of my  
449 surroundings, especially on CTA because I have to take the train to get to school. I have  
450 to take the bus. So I'm not sharing drinks and stuff. I don't know how, really not sure  
451 yet.

452

453 JS: What aspects of life did you take for granted before the virus?

454

455 MD: Um, It sounds weird, but just like getting up for school ,going places, seeing my friends  
456 that kind of stuff. And it's like, yeah, eating at restaurants is so much fun ,but then you realize  
457 it's like it's the act of being WITH someone like being in public with someone in the social  
458 setting is really just nice and fun. But then you have to realize like, if I got a FaceTime them  
459 for a few months. Let's do it I guess.

460

461 JS: How has the virus, maybe more grateful.

462

463 MD: This year, I've been really focusing on the like check your privileges thing. And yeah,  
464 definitely just knowing I have a home. I have a house to live in during this i'm not exposed  
465 on the street or



466 something like that. I'm very thankful that in moments where I do feel overwhelmed and  
467 stressed. I have a supportive mom to talk to you. I have supportive friends and family. I'm very  
468 thankful that I even have internet access because there are so many students all over the world  
469 who don't have E-learning opportunities because their families can't afford the internet or  
470 services aren't available to them. I'm just thankful that I can still be in college right now. I'm  
471 grateful that student employees were still receiving a paycheck, so I do still have income and  
472 that's amazing ,but it's going to stop to once school once this semester ends.

473  
474 JS: Explain why your education at Columbia is significant?  
475

476 MD: I think that as an interpreter the major goal in mind is equal access to quality, equity ,  
477 opportunity, accessibility. And I think Columbia is a really great place to recognize everyone's  
478 unique mixes and their strengths and understand your weaknesses and figure out how you can  
479 improve and strengthen them. And right now is very much a moment where we're learning  
480 how to strengthen ourselves by analyzing ourselves because we have so much alone time So  
481 yeah, I think, Columbia is a good place to start a dialogue about things that you might not have  
482 before.

483  
484 JS: What should Columbia have done differently?  
485

486 MD: Again, I thought we were going to close a few days sooner than we did. I was a little  
487 surprised. I mean, it was only a couple days, but I thought we would have shut down sooner.I  
488 know that there were housing refunds or partial housing refunds ,but there was no official  
489 tuition partial refund so that frustrated me because Columbia is majority commuter students  
490 not not for off campus living so I feel like off campus people kind of got duped a little bit in  
491 that sense. Yeah.

492  
493 JS: What was the most significant change in your life due to the virus?

494 MD: Just like figuring out how to still be me without seeing the people who I'm so used to  
495 seeing. I think that the limitation of who I can surround myself with right now is really  
496 frustrating. Because yeah family is great but you learn and grow from people you're not  
497 accustomed to people who are outside of what you know. So I think that limited amount of  
498 social interaction is a barrier to just like develop as a person, as a human cultural not a cultural a  
499 worldcitizen.

500  
501 JS: Do you have any advice for younger, I mean or future generations watching this that  
502 didn't go through quarantine or weren't alive during this?

503  
504 MD: I think that being in quarantine. Of course, it's a physical separation, but you don't have to  
505 disconnect. And that's something, it's hard to remind yourself. We don't have to shut our brains  
506 off and be like, I can't do this. And it's so easy to do, especially when you're at home. That's  
507 your comfy place you want to just give up, but remembering that we have things to do and  
508 we can get through it, it will it will end. And it's just a reality. You just have to face reality. It  
509 feels so unreal. It feels so unlike anything anyone's experience because it is but like, it's just a  
510 moment. It's just a thing people have lived through World Wars, people have lived through  
511 natural disasters and people have lived through major viruses. But just being aware of other  
512 people is really important right now, even though we think we're alone in our bedrooms, there's  
513 so much more than ourselves and we have to try to think of the greater good. And everybody  
514 else's situation rightnow.

515  
516 JS: Well, thank you so much for your time, Makeda. That concludes.

517

518 MD: Of Course. Thank you.