

I AM AN ESSENTIAL WORKER

Interview by: Zane Kirsch

Amanda George Hy-Vee Employee



PC: Amanda George

Q: How has your life changed since being in quarantine?

A: "I have slowly become more paranoid about the virus because of how bad it is getting, and knowing I come in contact with hundreds of people at work makes me take more precautions in order to keep myself and those around me safe. Nothing has changed too dramatically because I've always been close to my family and we spend time together constantly anyway, so I don't have a problem being with them, so the only thing that has changed would be the way I work and different things I do to be clean."

Q: What is it like being an essential Hy-Vee worker? Going to work every day knowing the virus is spreading quickly?

A: "In the beginning it never seemed like a huge deal. I was going to work like usual until Iowa went into a state of emergency. It seemed like every time I went into work something new was implemented in the store. There was one week where we were so busy you never had a chance to catch your breath in between costumers and the aisles were so empty it looked like a tornado hit. Everyone at Hy-Vee has been doing so much to keep the store clean and in check, but there's only so much you can do besides hope that you will stay healthy. I apply hand sanitizer about every five minutes that my hands have become dry and cracked. I clean the belt between each costumers with sanitizing spray. They put a glass panel in front and behind us at the check stands. We are able to wear masks and gloves. They made one way aisles and changed store hours. I know they are trying to help and maintain the spread, but it's scary. Nearly every costumers tells me to be safe and be

careful, but that only makes me worry more. It has also been tough dealing with certain people because they get angry when we don't have certain items or I'm taking too long to clean the belt when I'm only doing it to keep them safe. I'm more worried about my family's health than my own, and I'm terrified I will bring something home to them, but I feel like I am doing something to help others by still working."

Q: How are you keeping yourself safe from the virus? Are you social distancing besides work?

A: "The only time I leave the house is to go to work, and when I come home I make sure my hands are washed and sanitized, and I shower right when I get home. On the days I am not working, it is just my sister and I at home trying to keep ourselves entertained and staying away from anyone outside of our family."



EMPTY. Toilet paper aisles at stores are barren at the start of the COVID-19 outbreak. PC: Delicia Oxenreider



SIX FEET APART. People were asked to social distance six-feet apart while in public. Hy-Vee helped customers measure with stickers on the floor. PC: Delicia Oxenreider

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