**Amanda Rothstein**

**Interviewed April 2021**

Vera

So, what is your story of disability? What's your disability? And tell us a little bit about how it might have affected your life.

Amanda

I have Down Syndrome.

Vera

You have Down syndrome?

Amanda

Yes.

Vera

And with that, are there things that also come? Are there any other medical issues or anything that comes with that?

Amanda

No, I don't.

Vera

You don't think so? Okay. All right. So that was an easy question. Right?

Amanda

Oh, well, one more thing. I was included at regular school.

Vera

You were included in...?

Amanda

Regular school.

Vera

In regular school. Okay. Okay. So, you know, because of COVID, you know, our lives changed a little bit, right? So, prior to COVID. Before COVID started, tell me a little bit about what you used to do during the day, your daily routine. What did you do?

Amanda

I worked at AMC movie theater for 15 years. And I worked at chick-fil-a for three years.

Vera

So, what do you do with AMC?

Amanda

I'm a ticket taker.

Vera

Okay, and what do you do for chick-fil-a?

Amanda

I did the dining room. I helped people.

Vera

Okay, so you help people in the dining room? Cool. Was there anything else that you used to do during the day? Like, I know, you and your friend used to go bowling on Mondays. Do you want to tell us a little bit about that stuff?

Amanda

Yeah. Yeah, I want to say I have staff and we went to the gym and shopping.

Vera

You went to the gym and shopping and you used to go bowling too, right?

Amanda

Yeah, yeah.

Vera

Was there anything else that you did during the day, Amanda? Like, I know that you work but you didn't work every day. Right?

Amanda

Cooking.

Vera

You cooked, also? Was there was there anything else that we might be missing that you used to do during the day? Do you know of any other things?

Amanda

I do cooking with my staff, and we'd go to the movies.

Vera

Okay. All right. So now because of COVID and so many things changed for us, right? So how has COVID-19 impacted your life now? What changes were made because of COVID now?

Amanda

I really miss my friends and my job. And that's it. And I used to go to sports camp. And my trips with Camp Bournelyf, and my bowling league.

Vera

So now you're not doing any of those things now, right?

Amanda

Oh, yeah. I do miss going out to eat with my staff.

Vera

Okay, and going out to eat. Oh, that's an important thing. Yeah, I miss that myself. Are there any things that change with like your family? Did anyone else in your family maybe lose a job? Or do they now stay home with you more often that kind of thing.

Amanda

My mom. I'm staying home with my mom to stay safe. Sometimes I feel lonely because I can't see my friends and go places.

Vera

Okay, so, so you spend a lot more time with your mom now than you used to spend with her before, right?

Amanda

Oh, yeah. One more thing. My mom lost her job, too.

Vera

Okay, so she's able to stay home with you a little bit more. How about community? So you shared a little bit about how it affected the community, right? You told us that you're no longer doing the bowling league. What activities are you missing with the DCARO (Delaware County Advocacy & Resource Organization)? You're not doing Special Olympics anymore? Anything else in the community? Were there any special events that you might have missed?

Amanda

Yeah. The trips.

Vera

How about like any dances or anything like that? I know one of the things that you participated in was that big dance. Did you miss that dance this year?

Amanda

The Tim Tebow prom.

Vera

Yeah, the Tim Tebow prom. I know you missed that this year. They did it virtually, right?

Amanda

Yeah.

Vera

Why don't you tell us a little bit about how that was so different. Did you not get to see all your friends?

Amanda

I had no date.

Vera

No date! That's not a good thing for a dance.

Amanda

Yeah, I danced by myself sometimes.

Vera

So, you danced by yourself. Okay. So that was another thing that sort of changed in the community. Now I'm going to ask you a little bit about what challenges you might have faced due to COVID. So, like a little bit about the challenges and what changed for you like What was challenging? What did you miss? That kind of thing. So, you want to tell me a little bit about that?

Amanda

I'm staying home.

Vera

So, you don't you really don't go out very much at all? And you and that makes you feel how?

Amanda

I did work with my mom.

Vera

Okay. Okay. And how do you feel because you have to stay home a lot?

Amanda

It makes me sad a lot. I got two more things to tell you.

Vera

Yup.

Amanda

I sit by myself in the living room and I missed my trip in Maine.

Vera

Oh, okay. So, you just sitting in the living room and you miss your trips to Maine?

Amanda

Yes.

Vera

So, when do you go to Maine again? Do you think you'll be going again soon?

Marion

No, she was supposed to go last year but they canceled the trip. But tell them where they're going to try to take you this year. This is what Camp Bournelyf is. They're trying to get an alumni trip together. Tell them where they're going to go.

Amanda

Poconos.

Vera

Poconos. Okay!

Marion

And two staff, six kids, and they're going to drive instead. So, they changed it up and we're going to see if she can do that in June.

Amanda

Oh, yeah. And I do Zumba on YouTube.

Vera

Okay. So, Amanda, I'm going to ask you a little bit about what are your concerns about COVID and where your hopes for the future with COVID?

Amanda

I didn't have COVID.

Vera

I know you didn't have COVID, but what are your concerns or hopes for the future?

Amanda

I want it to go away.

Vera

You want COVID to go away. Have you been vaccinated yet?

Amanda

Yes, I did. Yup.

Vera

You did? And how about and how about your family? How about them? Have they been vaccinated?

Amanda

Yes, they did.

Vera

So, Amanda, you know what I forgot to ask you? So, with your family, I know your mom lives with you. But you have two sisters, right? Yes. And they don't live with you. Right?

Amanda

Sometimes. But my older sister, Missy, used to come here all the time.

Vera

Was she able to come during COVID?

Amanda

Oh, yeah, yeah, she had a face mask on.

Vera

She has to wear a mask to come to visit?

Amanda

And me too.

Vera

Okay. All right. Okay, so you said you haven't had COVID. Did anyone you know have COVID?

Amanda

Oh, yeah. Her name is Louise.

Vera

And she had COVID. Is she still with us?

Amanda

No. I mean, yeah.

Vera

Yeah, she is. That's good. So, she was able to fight it and beat it right.

Amanda

She almost died twice from it.

Vera

She almost died? But she didn't, right?

Amanda

No. My sister, my other sister, lives in Alabama.

Vera

Oh, you have your other sister. All right. Amanda, did you lose anybody during COVID or due to COVID?

Amanda

No. My sister from Alabama couldn't come home.

Vera

Your sister came home from Alabama?

Amanda

No, no she couldn't come home.

Vera

Okay.

Amanda

Because of COVID.

Vera

She could not come home because of COVID. Yeah. And how did you feel about that? Were you sad?

Amanda

Yeah. I miss my sister.

Vera

You miss her? Okay. So, do you think that she'll be visiting sometime soon, Amanda, or is it going to be a while before she comes?

Amanda

She came to see me for my birthday.

Vera

Oh, that's cool.

Amanda

She was afraid of flying by plane.

Vera

Okay, she didn't fly on the plane. Okay. She drove up?

Amanda

Yeah because of the COVID thing.

Vera

Yep. Because of the COVID thing. Okay. So, Amanda, I'm going to ask you again about did you end up losing anyone due to COVID? Or was there anybody in your life that passed away during COVID?

Amanda

Yes.

Vera

Who?

Amanda

My mom's aunt, Doris. Aunt Doris.

Vera

Your mom's aunt, Doris?

Amanda

In California.

Vera

In California? So, were you close to Aunt Doris?

Amanda

No. She was a friend of my mom's.

Vera

All right. And Amanda, I'm going to go back to that family question again, because I just remember you also have a grandmom, right?

Amanda

Yeah.

Vera

And were you able to Were you able to see grandmom during COVID?

Amanda

No. She broke her hip.

Vera

She broke her hip, okay. Was she in the hospital?

Amanda

Yeah, she's in a home.

Vera

Okay. And were you and your mom able to go visit her, or no?

Amanda

No.

Vera

No? Okay. Is there anything else you want to tell me about COVID?

Amanda

I'm not allowed to visit.

Vera

Not allowed to visit. Okay. Alright, is there anything else you want to tell me about COVID?

Amanda

I don't like it.

Vera

Okey-dokey. Well, I think I think you told us enough that I think we can get a pretty good manuscript from this.

Amanda

I want to see my friends again.

Vera

You want to see your friends again? Yeah, I think that's what pretty much what everyone feels they want to see their friends again. I just want to give you guys all a great big hug.

Amanda

I was at Bocce. I want to go back to that.

Vera

You want to go back to Bocce? Yeah, yeah, is there anything else you're missing?

Amanda

And swimming, too.

Vera

Swimming? That's right. You swim from Special Olympics so that's another sport thing.

Marion

She misses the dances she did.

Amanda

I missed Penn State.

Marion

Yeah, she missed her Penn State trip for swimming. She usually makes that. You have to gold medal in a prerequisite meet and then she would go to Penn State and they canceled all that. And sports camp. They go away in August for a week.

Amanda

Oh, yeah. I used to go to New York.

Vera

Oh, you travel way more than I do!

Amanda

Yeah, I was in New York City to see the play.

Vera

Is there anything else I'm that you want to tell me that you're missing or anything else that you want to talk about with COVID?

Amanda

Oh yeah there's one more. In Philly, at The Academy, I can't see the shows.

Vera

Oh, in Philly, you wanted to go see the shows?

Amanda

Yes.

Marion

Yeah, we used to go to the Academy of Music.

Vera

And you missed that?

Amanda

I love that.

Marion

We used to go every month.

Amanda

Yes.

Vera

Well, hopefully we can get back to we can get back to that stuff soon. I just want to make sure there's nothing else, Amanda, that I missed.

Amanda

Oh yeah, there's Bingo.

Vera

Bingo?

Amanda

Yeah. It was in the house where I live.

Vera

Wow. Yeah. Where you live? That's right. You guys have Bingo there. That's right. So Amanda, were you able to participate in activities online during COVID?

Amanda

Yes.

Vera

So, you definitely use Zoom?

Amanda

Yeah, with my staff.

Vera

With your staff? And did you like doing activities with Zoom?

Amanda

Yeah, the camp I used to go to does it.

Vera

Okay.

Amanda

It's on Sundays.

Vera

On Sundays?

Marion

Sundays at one o'clock. Yeah, they get together. And now you [Amanda] do Special Olympics, the heptathlon. They're doing something, she has a hard time saying it, it's called heptathlon where they're practicing on Thursdays and Sundays in case swimming, which is the current sport that she's in, comes back that she would be physically ready for it. They do exercises with the group on Zoom.

Amanda

Yes.

Vera

That's a good idea.

Marion

Yeah, they're doing that. And the Down Syndrome Interest Group also, they're having a magician show on Saturday night. And she's been doing stuff with them. And Chester County's Down syndrome interest group, they had a couple dances. You know, they're in their own house, but so did Special Olympics. And then they did a raffle. You bought the raffle tickets and they held up the winner. You didn't have your tickets, but they held up the winner with your name on it. And she won.

Amanda

I picked the best song, Bruno Mars.

Marion

Oh, yeah. She had to pick out the song that got the most kids up to dance and she picked Bruno Mars. So, they sent her a Wawa gift card. What was the song? 24 Karat? Yeah, 24 Karat. That was the hit.

Amanda

(singing)

Vera

Okay, so, Amanda, if there's nothing else you want to tell me, I'm going to have Julianne tell us what she has to tell us to wrap up. I just want to make sure there's nothing else.

Marion

Is there anything else you want to say? She's done.