

Students, faculty affected by coronavirus, forced to change plans

By Heath Stevens

staff writer

Around the world, many precautions are being taken to try to stop or slow down the spread of the coronavirus. These precautions have disrupted and affected many students lives at Oxford High School.

Among those affected the most by the coronavirus is former OHS student Paula Serrano. Serrano was a foreign exchange student at Oxford from Spain, but due to the coronavirus she was sent back early.

"I was supposed to leave U.S. on the first of June. It might not seem that much time but it is definitely almost a quarter of my experience," Serrano said.

Like most students at OHS, Serrano woke up thinking she was going to have to stay home and social distance, but she wasn't expecting the drastic measures that were being taken as she was asleep.

"I found out that I have to leave America [March 26]. I woke up ready to start online school and when I checked my emails, my scholarship sent me one saying that all the participants need to be back on Thursday," Serrano said.

According to Serrano, she is mainly sad that she had to leave so abruptly, not even getting to see many of her friends before she left.

"I always knew that it was going to be hard but I always imagined it [another way, having a party with friends]," Serrano said. "Now I have to leave without even saying goodbye to most of my friends and leaving a lot of my plans undone. I had so many plans such as prom and the musical that I've been waiting on for so long that will never happen."

According to Serrano, even though her time in America was cut short, she still took away many life lessons and is thankful for her time spent in Oxford.

"This time in America made my personality change completely," Serrano said. "It taught me to not judge anyone and from this experience, leaving unexpectedly, it showed me that we have to enjoy life as it comes, we don't know when is going to be 'our last' day of school or our last day hanging out with friends."

Another group of students affected by the coronavirus was the spring break trip to England, France and Spain. Their trip was cut short after President Donald Trump issued a travel ban on most of Europe.

"We found out about the travel ban when Mrs. Arizaga knocked on our doors around 6 A.M. and told us we needed to be ready to leave the next day," junior Brennan McInnis said. "We left on Friday, March 13 and we were supposed to leave on Saturday, March 14."

The group was still able to make it to all three countries and most of the sites they were supposed to visit, but due to some areas having a higher concentration of coronavirus cases, some places had to be avoided.

"We were able to go to London, Paris and Barcelona. We had to switch from Madrid to Barcelona because there was a spike in cases in Madrid," McInnis said. "We were worried that the Louvre museum would be closed but luckily, they reopened in time for us to go."

According to McInnis, there were no worries with getting home before the travel ban took effect because EF Tours was prepared and worked hard to get them on flights home quickly.

"As a precaution in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, President Trump announced a restriction on travel to the U.S. from Europe, effective Friday evening, March 13. As a result of this updated guidance, we are bringing our groups in Europe and the UK back to the U.S., and we have been in contact with all impacted travelers and their families. We are also postponing tours in March and April at this time," EF Tours said in a statement regarding bringing the tour groups home.

ALL ROADS LEAD TO FUN!

FREE* BOWLING!

*Coupon valid for one (1) free game of bowling. Shoe rental extra. Must present this original coupon at Guest Services upon arrival. Redemption based on lane availability at Premier Lanes Entertainment Center in Oxford, MS. No substitutions, refunds or exchanges and any unused portion of offer is void. Not valid with any other discounts/group packages, coupons or offers. Limit one coupon per person, per day. Expires May 15, 2020. Offer Code: Oxford Charger

Premier LANES
ENTERTAINMENT CENTER
THE AREA'S LARGEST ENTERTAINMENT CENTER
OXFORD, MS

Stay For The Day & Catch A Flick!

MALCO
CINEMA

BOWLING
LASER MAZE
ACTION ALLEY ARCADE
CAFÉ
PARTIES & EVENTS

204 COMMONWEALTH BLVD. HWY 7 @ SISK AVE. :: NEXT DOOR TO MALCO OXFORD COMMONS CINEMA
GOT A GROUP? Email: salesoxford@premierlanes.com :: www.premierlanes.com