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Interviewee: Ethan Hanley

Interviewer: John Stefanek

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John Stefanek: My name is John Stefanek I am a doctoral student at the University of Montana studying history. I am doing oral history interviews for the history department here at the University of Montana for COVID-19 experiences and I am here with Ethan Hanley. How about you introduce yourself, Ethan?

Ethan Hanley: Yeah, so my name is Ethan Hanley. I'm gonna become a senior next year at the University of Montana for the 2020-2021 academic year. I'm currently the president of the Delta Omicron Chapter of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity which is at the University of Montana.

JS: Excellent, glad to have you here. So I just wanted to ask some background questions. Where are you from initially?

EH: Yeah, so originally I'm from Bozeman, Montana. I grew up there my whole life so I spent all my life in Montana. I grew up there and then I kind of wanted a different experience and I wanted to go far away from home but just kind of the cost of college let me stay in state so that's kind of how I ended up here at U of M.

JS: Okay. And where there any other factors in bringing you to UM?

EH: Yeah, so when I applied to U of M I found out about the GLI program [**Franke Global Leadership Initiative**] and that was something that was really, really cool and interesting to me. But I'm no longer in the program 'cause I'm doing a lot of other work with student government, my fraternity, and trying to wrap up my accounting degree. But that was one of the cool things that kind of just drew me to campus. Originally I was between here and Rocky Mountain College, the cost got too high and then, you know, here just like with the big... like I guess the big campus feel when I visited there was about twelve thousand students and so that was really cool. And then I think the other thing that just kind of attracted me here is just the campus layout. Really, really sweet campus, got the Oval. And I mean everything is like a seven to ten minute walk from anywhere on campus so that was another cool thing and... but the biggest driver for me coming here was definitely the cost and... for the last four years I think I've only paid about like three thousand dollars in tuition total. I've gotten like the mostly tuition waivers and scholarships to cover my schooling which has been really nice.

JS: Great. And so you said you're a senior, you're an accounting major. What are... do you have any future career plans at the moment?

EH: Yeah, I think after college I'm gonna work for an auditing firm. It's a pretty good pathway from the Masters of Accountancy program here. And I don't really know where I'm gonna work yet. I'm kind of really open to doing whatever. Originally I was gonna just try to get out Montana, but I think now I'm fine with pretty much living here, wherever or going to Portland or Seattle, that's usually the common destination for people coming out of the Masters of Accountancy program. And then from there, you know, I don't know. I think I wanna work at firm for like five to seven years and then kind of go from there. If I become partner, that's cool. I'll definitely be partner but if not, you know, I'm fine with just kind of working in corporate or working where else for accounting. I'm kind of... I'm pretty much open to doing whatever at this point so.

JS: Okay. And so you're the current chapter president of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity at your University of Montana. What attracted you to Kappa Sigma?

EH: So originally when I came I was not planning on joining Greek life and I was pretty much opposed to it. The reason I joined was there was this guy who lived in my dorm floors, his name's Bridger, Bridger Liston, and he just recruited me to come over for spring rush my freshman year. So I said I'll check it out and get some free food and then maybe go back to my dorm. And I checked it out and it was cool and I liked it and I went back a second time and they offered me my bid to join the fraternity. And so I said, "sure I can definitely try it out" and then it just kind of ended up snowballing from there and I ended up really, really liking it. And then after my freshman year I decided to run for exec and I became an executive member of Kapp... of the chapter my sophomore year. So, it was kind of like a weird coincidence of how I joined pretty much. It wasn't something I was planning on doing in college, but you know that I've done it I've really enjoyed my time with the fraternity.

JS: Yeah, and so you mentioned you weren't interested at all at joining Greek life at first. So Kappa Sigma... how large are we talking here as far as chapter at the University of Montana?

EH: Yeah, so for the past couple years we've been hovering in the low to mid-fifties. And I think this year we ended at fifty-six? I'm not sure, I'll have to check on the roster, but it was... we were definitely above fifty-five by the end of the year this year.

JS: Okay. And so how did you end up becoming president of Kappa Sigma? What's that process like?

EH: Yeah, so for us, you know, you have to spend a year as an executive before you can run for president so I already met that requirement by becoming the secretary my sophomore year. I was originally planning on running for president last year, but I decided to run for student body vice president and I couldn't really do both at the same time 'cause the VP of the the student government is just a massive responsibility and I couldn't really do that on top of president of Kappa Sigma so I just kind of took a year off from the fraternity and did student government. And then this year there was a little bit of up in the air of who was going to be president and

was gonna run for exec so I decided to just step up and run for president. And now I'm also the business manager of the student government too so... just kind of the way I went about it was I just talked to guys in the chapter kinda how they were feeling and then I ran for president and got it. It was a pretty easy process 'cause I ran unopposed but typically the elections are little bit more contentious.

JS: Okay, and... contentious, like how so? Being more competitive?

EH: Yeah, yeah.

JS: Gotcha, okay. And so what is it like being president of a fraternity on-campus while you're also studying? I imagine it's a lot of work.

EH: Yeah, it's a lot of work and it's definitely stressful at times. And I've only been president during COVID so it hasn't been like the true and like normal experience from when I was on exec a couple years ago. But it's a little weird. I'm kind of trying to set everything up and run it while trying to maintain a chapter during this time so it's a very unique experience right now because we're having to go through and redesign our entire rush process, we're having to go through and redesign all of our brotherhoods and socials, and we're just... you know it's kind of weird to say the least and especially when it was winding down at the end of the academic year, you know we had grade checks and those were a little bit different this year too because we had the credit/no credit option that we encouraged guys to utilize and now with the academic year shifting there's another challenge that that's presenting. So for me right now I think it's a little bit of a different experience than most presidents have had when taking office. For me it's been, what next is gonna be the unexpected thing that happens? There's definitely going to be those things every single year and there's usually like three or four instances but right now we have like five with the credit/no credit option, the academic calendar shifting, the virtual rush that's gonna happen. So for me it's... the biggest thing that I'm looking forward to and the thing that I'm gonna do is anticipate big changes for just this year and learn to adapt in a way that the fraternity can survive and thrive.

JS: Yeah, and I wanted to ask too, for folks listening to this interview not sure what the terms are but you mentioned the terms: your socials, rush, brotherhood. Can you go over like what some of those terms mean?

EH: Yeah, so rush is usually the process of how we get new members. Usually that's about a week during the fall semester where we host a bunch of events and then at the end of the week we invite them to join the fraternity. And that usually takes place the second or the third week of the fall semester and then we usually do another one again during the spring semester. So that's... the rush is just the recruitment term. For brotherhoods it's just basically activities that we do with just our chapter. So, you know, we have fifty guys at an event of doing brotherhood like watching a movie or something. And then socials is I guess like the coined term "parties," and it's where we have social functions with other sororities or fraternities and

sororities and what not and just hanging out and going to a function like going to a formal or anything like that.

JS: Okay, excellent. And I wanted to go over to you... brought up a good point I wanted to bring up. So what was it kinda like being on your executive committee prior to COVID compared to now? How has that... what's been a big change there?

EH: Yeah, I think... yeah, that's a good question. You know I think for being on exec when... two years ago it was a lot more dependable I should say. You know I think, you know, with COVID it kinda dispels some challenges but it also raises another challenge. So I think the difficulty for both is about the same but it's a way different environment what you're doing. So, like, you know, when I was on two years ago, you know, we had the consistent social functions, we had the consistent brotherhood, we had a normal rush week, we had everything that was, you know, normal. For now... right now it's we don't have the problems of, you know, running risk or doing risk management for those types of functions anymore but we have new problems that are presented to us, and how are we gonna connect with our members, how are we gonna connect with the Greek community, how are we gonna connect with the university community, how are we gonna get new members? And I think those problems and being flexible when they do come up is gonna be the key this year compared to previous years where you can have a more structured format and have success then.

JS: Yeah. And so with that, how are you communicating your brothers over the summer? I imagine you're trying to plan everything out this summer for fall recruitment. How has that process been so far?

EH: It's been challenging to say the least. You know for us we usually do group chats and mass text messaging so it's a good way for guys to get information but that's not always the most successful. And usually what I did, and this is what I did with grade checks and kind of the academic calendar shift and our chapter having to shift our calendar for the fall semester, was I just called every single one of them and I checked in to see how they were doing. It's the easiest way to kinda like get connection with the members, get to see where they're coming from, like are they planning on coming back to school, are they planning on coming back to the chapter, what are their thoughts if they do come back to the chapter. And that seems to be the easiest way to but it takes a long time with a chapter size of like fifty-seven. So, you know, that's typically been the way, and it's been time-consuming but I'd say it's been rewarding because I think it'll allow us to retain more members when it comes to the fall semester but also it allows a good connection for guys to know that like, you know, I can text who ever and, you know, we can just talk, talk or hang out if we're in town. That's been the other thing I've been trying do, is really connect with all the guys that are currently in the chapter in town, whether that's like going to to our house or going out to a bar and having a couple of drinks. And that seems to be a good way to at least keep them grounded in the chapter and making sure that they're... when the fall semester comes, you know, it's gonna be ready and back up for business.

JS: Yeah, and I know too, I just wanted to bring up briefly, I know some of the university has taken steps, like here at the University of Montana, there's been steps taken on alcohol restrictions and do some of these events. How has Greek life responded at UM to some of the restrictions put on Greek life after these incidents if you can talk about that for a bit?

EH: Yeah, you know I think the Greek system has responded well. And it's interesting that you point that up because right when I got on the executive committee, my fraternity actually implemented a new alcohol rule which prohibited hard liquor at events and in the house in general and then a couple months after the university implemented those so we were actually already implementing some of those alcohol guidelines before the university issued them. And I think overall it's been fine. I, you know, I think it's helped address some of the problems. I haven't really been in the chapter that long to say like definitively like, you know, these things worked, these things didn't work at the time when those alcohol guidelines had been implemented but, you know, I don't really see them as bad reforms. I think most of the guys in my chapter really didn't see that big of a problem with the changes of alcohol 'cause to be honest most of the guys in my chapter don't really drink hard liquor so it really wasn't that big of a deal when it happened.

JS: Okay. I wanted to bring the conversation more towards back to COVID. I wanted to ask, when do you remember first hearing about COVID? When exactly?

EH: Sorry, can you ask that again?

JS: Oh yeah, sorry. When do you first recall hearing about COVID-19?

EH: So I heard about it, I wanna say like mid to late January. I was actually sitting in my office and our accountant had a news article that popped up on her news feed and talked about how there was a big COVID outbreak in Wuhan, China. And I was like, "wow, that's pretty bad," but I thought it was gonna be the same thing as like ebola or swine flu, like it wasn't gonna be that bad. And then when it started reaching the U.S. and there some more alarming things that were coming up, you know, that's kind of when I shifted and started to worry a little bit. And I think the thing that really got me was when the University of Montana declared to go remote only, you know that was a big deal. So I think the first time I heard about it was absolutely nothing and then when the University of Montana decided to go remote about a month and half later that's when it really, really struck me that it was a pretty big deal.

JS: This would've been around like mid-March you would've started hearing about this... like you started seeing these big trends happening to... awareness for COVID-19, right?

EH: Yeah.

JS: Gotcha, okay. And yeah... and so like you mentioned remote online. Is this when... do you think this a point in your life when you started to realize that like COVID-19 was like, you know, really affecting your daily life or other's?

EH: Yeah, I... yeah, I absolutely did. And, you know, so I was pretty high in the student government and I kinda knew that the university was going to this shift. We kind of found out about this decision about ten days earlier... ten days before the remote only was gonna happen and that was really the first point when I knew it was gonna start affecting my life. It really hadn't up until when I got exposed and had to quarantine. So it didn't... I knew it was gonna affect my life from I think, March 2 was when I originally found out the university's intent to potentially go remote and then March 12 was when they declared that the university system will go remote for the remainder of the semester or will go remote. And then two days after that was when I got quarantined and I didn't leave my house for eight days. That was when it really, really first started to affect me, or I guess the second time after going remote. And then I think just everything after that, you know, everything has been affected so. Yeah, I'd say when the university first announced it was going remote, that's when my life was definitely impacted and then getting quarantined.

JS: Yeah, and so what do you think has been like one of the most challenging things about living during the pandemic, you know, at home outside of school?

EH: I think the toughest thing is probably social connections, you know, you didn't... there wasn't that many people to kinda connect with, you couldn't go to the bars, we couldn't go to the restaurants. You just basically stayed in your house and Zoomed people, and **[laughs]** it was challenging and I think that was one of the things that we noticed about the fraternity was, you know, no one was really connecting during this time 'cause we were all just stuck in our houses. So it was nice after a couple of weeks for... after a couple of weeks to do chapter meetings because from there, you know, you have like a dedicated like thirty minutes to an hour every single week when you can talk to guys and then you can stay on the Zoom call and talk afterwards or connect to like some other forms and it was helpful that way to do it. But I'd say definitely the biggest problem was the lack of social connection.

JS: Okay. And yeah, since you mentioned it I just wanted to bring it up too, you know, running a chapter meeting over Zoom during COVID-19 with fifty guys, I mean that's a challenging thing to do. I know there have been articles reporting that, you know, Zoom meetings can be really exhausting for us 'cause we really have to pick up on social cues, it's much more challenging to do that. So how is it like running a chapter meeting on Zoom over COVID-19 and you're all separated? I imagine it's really challenging.

EH: Yeah, it is very challenging, and we actually did our elections over Zoom so it was **[laughs]**—

JS: Oh.

EH: —even a bigger hurdle to jump. Yeah, and it's really tough because, you know, you can have like guys that like don't focus and when you have fifty guys on a screen and some of them don't turn their video on you don't necessarily know if they're paying attention and getting all of the information and then also picking up on social cues too so. Usually what we did was we just ran through the reports of everything that we needed to get through in a pretty efficient, timely manner and then we just allowed time at the end to just talk and kinda digest about the week that's coming up and, you know, what happened. "I had a terrible test and now I need to get my grade up in this class," so we usually... we tried to allow for unstructured just rants, time for everyone to have that with everyone and then as long as we got through the structured stuff people could do whatever they want after.

JS: Okay. And so during the summer during... with the pandemic going on have you been also working too?

EH: Yeah, so I'm... I currently have two jobs right now. One of them is being the business manager for the student government and I do about three or four hours a day for that. And then I'm also doing canvassing for the Montana Democratic Party.

JS: Okay. And so canvassing entails going around door-to-door right? And informing people about your candidate, your candidates, right?

EH: Yeah, it's mostly just collecting information about where voters are kind of leaning and then getting them information, the people at the party.

JS: Okay. And how was... how has canvassing changed during COVID-19? I imagine with face-to-face interaction makes... that complicates things.

EH: Yeah, so usually what I do is... what I used to do when I canvassed was I handed people the form and they could fill it out. I don't do that anymore and I just fill it out myself, I just ask them the questions. I wear a mask and I also wear gloves just so that when I knock on peoples' doors or ring their doorbells I'm not kind of spreading. And then I just kind of run through the list and ask them questions. Although most of the time I'm not canvassing, even though that's kind of my position, I'm usually at a table and gathering signatures for initiatives and what not. And that has also changed too because what I do now is people have to sign themselves, they can't not sign themselves 'cause they have to have a signature in order to sign an initiative. So what I do is I keep two buckets of pens, and I think you 'em probably at the supermarket, just clean pens and dirty pens and then, you know, when pens get flocked I just scrub them with the disinfectant and the put 'em back so, yeah.

JS: Okay. And so you mentioned some of these... the business manager take a few hours of your day each day, so like how... on average how much would you say being chapter president like

takes out of your day? Or your week, I should say. How much does that play into your daily week? I mean your week, sorry, yeah.

EH: Yeah, I'd say about ten to fifteen hours. It's quite a lot work with... I think it would probably be less during a normal summer just because we have to redesign everything this summer for a fall semester that's still uncertain. And then I'm also still figuring out the housing situation since we don't own our houses, we have to rent them. So I'm still getting that kind of set up and getting all of the guys comfortable with moving in and then hopefully getting those guys to move in as quick as possible.

JS: Okay. And so yeah you mentioned the housing, and as far as fall recruitment, if you feel comfortable sharing, what are some of like the things you're planning right now for fall recruitment? 'Cause I know recruitment's a really big, face-to-face thing usually in the past, meeting people. How are you gonna do rush after kind of the fallout of COVID-19? You know, I think that's gonna be an eventual thing the fraternities and Greek life have to deal with.

EH: Yeah, so for us the university's gonna be really, heavily involved in the rush process. So the first couple days will just basically be virtual. The first day it'll be, they'll show our chapter videos, we'll come to the info sessions or whatever sessions, stand up and introduce ourselves and then from there, that'll be the end of the first thing. I think that will take place on a Sunday. And then Monday will be like the house tours day but because the university concerns about like a bunch of freshmen, sophomores, juniors coming into our houses and checking us out and maybe spreading COVID-19 around they instead opted for us to do a... we would do house videos where we would tour our own houses, they would watch all the videos and then they would walk around the university district and go and see everyone's houses. And I think that's a decent way to show it just from a health perspective but also making sure that they get the full experience 'cause it'll basically be the same thing, just a little bit more of a glorified house tour. And then the next day will be something on the Oval, I don't know what we're doing yet. I don't think anyone knows what we're doing, but it's an event on the Oval. And then Wednesday is kinda like a meet and greet with individual chapters in the UC **[University Center]**. And then Thursday will be the day that everyone extends bids and Friday will be the day that everyone pledges or does their new member ritual with their new members and welcomes them into the chapter.

JS: Okay **[audio glitches, unintelligible]**. So as of right now, the University of Montana is planning to start earlier in August for the academic year and then end hopefully by Thanksgiving week, around that time. How has that really changed your fraternity's plans for the next semester? I imagine it's a lot to deal with.

EH: Yeah, so it's changed quite a bit actually. You know we had originally planned for rush to be the second week of September and we had to completely move that and do it differently. So we had to have a different timeline set up for that, we have to have a different set up for when we initiate our pledges because the other thing is that with the academic calendar and where

testing's gonna be, we wanna line it up to where initiation takes place on a day that, you know, no one's busy. So that's been kind of weird to work through. The other thing was, you know, if we have social functions. We were planning on having a formal for the fall semester but also that's up in the air now because we have to figure out the scheduling fix and then other thing that we have to figure out is how we're gonna do it. And then I guess just for everything else, you know, those shifted with their respective calendar shifts too, so those haven't been the big deal it's just mainly been rush and our timeline for initiation.

JS: Okay. And I probably should have asked this earlier but I'm also curious. Did, with COVID-19 happening and the university taking action for COVID-19 in March, did that really affect your pledging at all or like some of your events that you had planned for that semester?

EH: So it affected our events. We didn't really have pledges at the time so... oh no, we actually did. What we ended up doing is we just actually had just initiated 'em before COVID hit so it wasn't that big of a deal. It definitely affected our events though. And we had actually planned on hosting our overnight formal in April but because of university restrictions they placed a ban on socials for the rest of the semester and we had to cancel that. The other thing that we had to cancel was actually our composite photoshoot. We were supposed to get our composites done usually in April and that's how it works every single year and we couldn't this year because of COVID we couldn't have anything on the third floor UC which is where we reserved our composite photoshoot for so we had to reschedule both of those things for the fall semester and move those to the respective timelines. And the other thing is that we rescheduled them before the academic calendar shifted so now we have to reschedule them again with the academic calendar shift from the spring semester. So it was really tricky to navigate during the spring.

JS: Right. I'm also curious to get your opinion on this, but you think COVID-19 has maybe forever made some changes on how Greek life operates? Recruitment or pledging? Do you think it's possibly, you know, changed the system forever, or what do you think?

EH: No, I don't think so. I think this is just gonna be like a one-year, temporary thing and it'll probably go back to being the same when everything is normal and everything's good. I think like the university being heavily involved in rush is something a lot of chapters have opposed, including mine, and we kinda like the freedom to kinda do our own rush events without having to do the university/IFC-sponsored stuff. And that's been a pretty big point of contention, but it seems like we were kind of already moving to a rush system that's similar to what we were doing just with a little bit more independence and the ability to do events at your house. So I would say no at least for rush and I would say no for pretty much everything but I think one thing this year that chapters have the opportunity to do, and this is something that my chapter's going to do, is kinda take a look and see what we want to change within our fraternity that we either don't like or we kinda wanna see improved. I think this is a perfect time to do it because with everything not going on it's, you know, a perfect time to go look at it and hopefully people have the time to take a look at what the fraternity and what you want to get

out of the fraternity, what you want the fraternity to become, and what you wanna look back on so that we can have a chapter that's very strong, very efficient, and is bold but is something that everyone is really, really excited to come back to for homecoming weekend or whenever they're in Missoula.

JS: Okay. What were some of those things on your agenda that you'd like to change for your chapter? Is there anything that you want to change or your chapter wants to see changed?

EH: Yeah, well I think I have a few right off the top of my head. And I think this will probably be done during the spring semester but one of the things is not... I guess kinda changing the culture around mental health. I think it's something that we've had... I've seen like a couple guys struggle with, and I think is the culture is fine right now but I think it can definitely be improved. But I think the other thing that can definitely happen is making sure mental health resources are available for all of our members and that they can utilize them whenever they want like going to Curry and using counseling classes or going to Curry and getting help with any like depression that they're having. I think those... that's gonna be very vital for our chapter and all chapters moving forward 'cause it's something that, you know, not just one fraternity or even a set of fraternities deals with it it's something that everyone deals with in their lifetime. So that's one. I think the second thing to is just kind of the way that people connect in the brotherhood. I think we have something that's really cool but I think that one thing that could definitely be improved is our big/little system and getting like potentially a mentorship program with our alumni going that to where they're more involved in the chapter and guys get more out of the chapter with connecting with alumni and people get more out of the chapter with connecting with older guys in the chapter or their bigs, their seniors, or whoever. So those are just kind of the two things that come to mind right now but I'm sure there's gonna be a lot more that comes out during our revisioning process in the spring.

JS: Okay. And just for quick clarification you said Curry Health Center on campus, right? Okay, and then I think you mentioned IFC earlier, the Inter-fraternal council? Okay, I just wanted to make sure. Okay, no that's excellent. Do you think I've... do you think the issue of mental health is something that a lot folks don't mention when coming to Greek life? Especially fraternities?

EH: Yeah, yeah I think so. I think it's one that just doesn't really get a lot attention because guys... people are a lot more into going to social functions or, you know, we have prep for rush, "I wanna come to the sick brotherhood event." And it's something that kind of, not necessarily gets pushed to the back burner but just, you know, not prioritized enough. And I think one thing that I think the sororities actually do pretty well is putting an emphasis on mental health and those resources. I think one sorority that does it really well is actually Delta Gamma and they have a few members in their chapter that are part of the UM Mental Health Allies, and they advertise the resources and the help that members need to their chapter and it seems to work out really well for them. And I think a system like that I think is something that I want similar in our chapter but also seeing on steps that they think they can improve and hopefully

implementing the improved steps in our chapter too is definitely something that I could see as part of a mental health reform.

JS: Okay. And I guess I have one question too. I'm wondering, you know, if... what do you think right now or... what do you think fraternities can be doing right now potentially to help others during COVID? Like for relief efforts. Do you have any opinions on that?

EH: Yeah, so I think, this actually came up during March and April where people that were quarantined or were immunocompromised couldn't leave their houses, so I think one cool service idea that people could do is deliver people groceries or whatever they need for like a couple hours every week and, you know, protect the people that don't.... that can't leave their homes because of the risk of contracting COVID and potentially dying. I think that's a great service component that I know a few people did in my chapter, it wasn't like a chapter-wide thing, but a few people definitely volunteered for that and it was really cool. And I think for those types of issues it should definitely be something that fraternities are active on for fundraising. I think fundraising I could delineate into two different categories which is fundraising that the chapter does and fundraising that alumni do. I think for alumni it's crucially important that they donate to scholarship initiatives as well as like emergency funds for students at their university because those are really what's gonna keep students afloat during this time especially with financial instability on the rise and the potential for students to get laid off at any time if there's an outbreak, that's something that really, really worries students and if they get unemployed again without another COVID fund they're gonna really, really gonna be struggling. For chapters I think, you know, for fundraising... you know I think the classic response would be like fundraising for research and fundraising for, you know, a cure, a treatment, a vaccine for COVID-19 and I think that's all well-intentioned but I think a better place to probably to put it is community help where they need it. So community help in I guess like enforcing social distancing, community help and funds to like homeless shelters where people can't really get on unemployment, can't afford food and basic needs while also still risking contracting COVID-19. And I guess another one would be raising money for like people that are essential workers and first responders to this crisis, so healthcare workers and those people I think is gonna be a much better cause than donating to a vaccine because there's already a mountain of money going to that initiative when I think that really where fundraising dollars should be going is helping people on the ground that are really suffering through this and going through a hard time.

JS: Okay. And you brought up a point there I wanted to mention too. Kappa Sigma nationally, what has Kappa Sigma done? Have you noticed anything during COVID-19, helping out other chapters or giving guidelines. What has Kappa Sigma done at the national level during COVID-19?

Hanely: Yeah, so they had initiated kind of, you know, making sure that people were following social distancing and that was pretty much it for the beginning part and what they've continued to do now is they host online webinars [iPhone text alert goes off] where they kind of like have

alumni or people that are on supreme executive committee, which basically run the national fraternity, come and give talks to people as well other famous alumni like... aw man, I'm trying to remember... oh, Tito who developed Tito's Vodka gave one and there's been a couple of other guys and that's been really cool in keeping guys connected to the chapter and keeping guys connected to the fraternity. I think that's something that they did really **[iPhone text alert]**, really well but that's pretty much the only stuff they've done for like philanthropic causes. You know they've encouraged chapters to do those types of things but **[iPhone text alert]** they... I just lost my train of thought. Yeah, you know for philanthropic causes we still do kind of our Military Heroes philanthropy. They're still... they're really much encouraging guys to do service for other philanthropic causes for COVID-19.

JS: Okay. I guess I'll just briefly mention, there's a Kappa Sigma chapter at Montana State here in the... have you communicated with that chapter at all during this historic time period to try to, you know, combine, you know, thoughts or ideas and how to, you know... or is that something that, you know, chapters don't usually really don't do? 'Cause I'm not really sure.

EH: Yeah, we really haven't connected with them during this crisis. We talked with them... we usually talk with them a bunch during the fall semester just because we connect over Cat-Griz, whether it's in Bozeman or here. So, you know, it's something that I hadn't actually thought about and I might end up doing this summer to just see where they're at and kinda their plans for the fall semester, but no, we haven't connected with them over this crisis.

JS: Okay. Well if you want to let me know I'm actually interviewing him as well actually, his name is Carter. So I'm gonna be interviewing him actually next week so I was just curious. Yeah, and just a question back to COVID... so we're going through a phased reopening right now in the state. Businesses are open but at limited capacity, and I'm curious to get your opinions on the phased reopening. The timing of it, I think it was... it started in late April. What are your opinions on it?

EH: You know, I think I'm mostly favorable towards the phased reopening. There were certain issues that I had with it when it initially rolled out. So the phase one, I thought everything in there was good and that was at a point when Montana had very, very few cases. I think the only thing that really... my concern was with potential to allow schools to reopen. That was my biggest concern because I didn't really see the need to reopen schools like a month before school ends, and especially with the risk there I just disagreed with that one. I do think phase two came a bit too early because I wish the governor and the state kind of witnessed the effects a phase one a little bit more before going into phase two 'cause phase one went into effect and then ten days later they announced phase two which is not enough time to see if phase one is compatible with how coronavirus is being handled in Montana. But I agree with it now, although we are seeing a pretty big spike in cases, like I think we just got twenty-five new cases yesterday which is insane compared to the amount of cases that we've had in the state over the past three months. So, you know, I don't know and I wish... I hope that they don't move into phase three too quick because we are seeing a pretty good spike in cases and we

need to deal with that first before allowing more businesses to reopen and allowing the economy to get back into normalcy.

JS: Sure. No, yeah I think we've... we were around five hundred when the phased reopening started and I think we've seen up to a little over six hundred now, so yeah. I'm wondering too like, have you been going out more with the phased reopening? Have you been traveling out more... you mentioned earlier you started to go to bars with your brothers to communicate. Are you doing that more often since the phased reopening?

EH: Yeah, I did that a lot more often in the phase two compared to the phase one reopening. And yeah, I've been that a lot more. I've been trying to pick restaurants that are little bit better with social distancing, so a good one is Red's **[Red's Bar]**, they have the plastic dividers at the bar and they... you have one seat at the table... or you have one table that you can stick to. But yeah, I've been trying to go out a little bit more and try to enjoy myself and everyone that I'm with.

JS: Okay. And I probably should have asked this earlier but are you currently living by yourself or are you with family?

EH: So I'm living in Missoula just by myself and a couple of other guys back in the fraternity house.

JS: Okay.

EH: We have a guy that's twenty-four that's just living in for the summer and then another guy who's twenty who's gonna be in the chapter this upcoming year so.

JS: Okay. And have they also had... what have their responses been to the reopening, COVID, in general?

EH: Yeah, I think they both liked it and I think, you know, consistent with me they've been going out too, not too much but, you know, they've been going out a little bit.

JS: Okay. Yeah, so I guess one thing... we've gone through all my questions I wanted to get through here, but one question I had... what more than anything do you want people listening to this interview or reading it to understand about your life before and during COVID-19 right now? What do you think you want folks to know the most?

EH: I think... you know I think the thing to know is that... or the thing that I want people to know is... you know this is definitely the most unexpected thing that's ever happened in my life and I think this whole year has just been crazy with all the developments, and to have it happen while you're a junior in college and becoming a senior, you know you're right in prime time. It's definitely a weird experience to really be hyper-focused in school and student government

while also this big national crisis is going down. So for me, observing how the crisis has unfolded has been very, very strange, and it's definitely been a really, really weird time. But I think from this crisis I think people should definitely take lessons to be learned in the future. Obviously I think there's lessons to be learned all around from our national government, to our state government, to even our local, municipality levels and to one, ensure this never happens again, but to two, also to see how we responded to the crisis. You know, when the crisis originally hit, UM took about two weeks to establish a emergency fund, which is spearheaded by the student government, and having... lending the helping hand to get students where they needed to be financially in order to survive the crisis is really admirable and really commendable and I think when we these tough times happen again it should be on everyone that's in a better position, and hopefully I'm in a bit better position the next time that this happens to lend a helping hand, to send resources and money where they need to because that's really, really how we can get through a crisis like this and how we can ultimately survive and function as a society.

JS: Okay. And yeah, just one final question. What has been, overall, the most rewarding thing about being part of Kappa Sigma before or during, you know, this pandemic? Any of those areas you wanna go for.

EH: Well, I think before, my answer would be the same but now I think my answer is the same and I'm a little bit more passionate about it, it's the guys that you see in the chapter. And I think it's really those social connections that you have with your... with the guys in your chapter as well as everyone in the Greek community that allows it be a really cool and successful place to just hang out and just hang out with people. You know, and every chapter's different like that and that's why every chapter is really unique, it's just the guys in the chapter make it up and, you know, everything that happens there is really, really based on how... what the guys are doing. So yeah, I mean to me it's really the social connections and after, you know, being quarantined and after the limited social interactions that we could have had during COVID I think especially now it's the guys in the house and the friends that you make while you're in Greek life.

JS: Excellent. Well, I think that'll do it.

[End of Interview]