



## TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION UNIFIED COMMAND

### *JIS Interview #2 - Part 1: Mom*



The next interview comes from a Nation member who tested positive for Coronavirus COVID-19 and has since recovered. This individual chose to remain anonymous, in place of pictures from this person, the Unified Command was able to create some graphics to accompany this person's story. This interview will be broken into three parts that will be released over the next few days.

My mom was sick, we thought she had a cold. But she refused to go to the doctor, she said "it's just a cold," but she got worse. I took her to the clinic and they [sent] her to the hospital for pneumonia. They [tested for COVID-19] and it was positive. I had been taking care of her for three days prior to taking her to the clinic.

We were going through a lot because she [was] in bad condition and was in the ICU. They were going to intubate her, but it was up to her to fight and get out of this. My mom is an elder and we were going through a lot of emotions. I read up on a lot of stuff because at the time of our quarantine, I was trying to find ways to help my mom. What things could be done to not have her to get intubated? She'd be sedated and it would be up to her to fight, to get back and to be strong enough to fight COVID-19.

She was so strong, and even though she knew she was really sick and wasn't feeling good, she always managed to say something funny, make you laugh. That's what got me through was her strength. When it comes to your family, you don't have your mom's touch. You don't have your mom to hold you, to embrace you and tell you it's going to be OK. Because my mom, she does that. She holds us, when we don't feel well or we don't feel good or we're going through stuff. She's the one to tell us, "keep your head up, you're going to be all right." We couldn't get that from her. That was the hardest thing because she was sick. Then when I wanted comfort, I couldn't get it because she wasn't there and she was fighting for her life. And then I was trying to survive as well.



## TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION UNIFIED COMMAND

### JIS Interview #2 - Part two: Testing Positive

On June 4, 2020 the Joint Information System released part one of a three part interview with a Nation member who tested positive for COVID-19 and has since recovered. This is part two of that interview.

I had been taking care of [my mom] for three days prior to taking her to the clinic. So we wound up going into quarantine. Me, my brother and nephew. When she wound up positive, we were like, "OK, we've got to be careful." My sister, she's a nurse (RN), she told us to watch out for symptoms. I wound up getting sick on Saturday. I was cleaning yard, the wind was blowing, and pollen was in the air, I figured it was my allergies.

I'm asthmatic too, so I knew I was going to be high risk if I caught it. I ran a temperature on Saturday night, I called my sister, I told her, and she [said], "Isolate yourself from the boys and just stay away. If you get worse, go to the hospital." Monday my sister said, "I think you should go get tested." I went to the clinic and I got my test results back that Tuesday, I tested positive. Waiting for the result, I [said], "OK. Well, if I do come positive, what's going to happen? What I do?" My family got together and said, "It's going to be OK, we're going to get through this together." Thankfully, we did it together. They helped me with encouragement, cooked for me, left the food at the door because they couldn't come in.

I was in isolation at home because I didn't want to go to the hospital, knowing that I was going to be by myself. And just going through what we went through with my mom was really hard. I was telling my family, "I'm just going to stay home and take care of myself." There were points during my isolation that my sisters kept telling me, "You need to go to the hospital." I said, "No. If something's going to happen, I'm going to take it at home." And it got bad. It was really bad because my temperature got to 106, it was the worst feeling ever. I was waking myself up every hour, depending on what days I was feeling good or feeling bad. I was setting my alarm on my phone and telling my nephew and brother to wake me up or to check on me by pounding on the door to make sure I was awake and I was OK. The day I ran a 106 temperature I was like, "Oh, my God, I'm going to die or something's going to happen to me." My alarm went on for an hour, my family was so exhausted that my brother and my nephew didn't hear my alarm and they never came to the door. When I woke up, I was in a deep sweat and I was like, "What the hell happened to me? Where did I go?" Because I went somewhere. I got to see my family that went before me. My dad told me, "You can't stay. You have a purpose. You've got to go back. They need you. You have a purpose. Go back." And I said, "No, I want to stay. I haven't seen you guys in a long time." I was scared, I prayed every day, you know, because with my mom being in the hospital, I prayed for her. And not only that, my family's mother in-law was COVID positive, too. She didn't make it. She passed away from COVID.

I have some kind of medical understanding, I kind of knew the basics and with my sister's help, maybe that's why I was able to get through it. I explained it to my wife and she [said], "I don't know how you did it. Because if it was me, I wouldn't know what to do." I [said], "I don't think anybody knows what to do if they're put in that position to have to isolate themselves because you're by yourself."

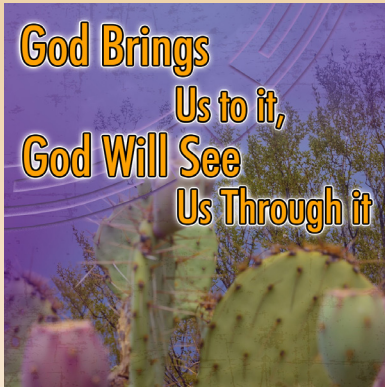






## TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION UNIFIED COMMAND

### *JIS Interview #2 - Part 3: Do Something*



On June 4, 2020, the Joint Information System released part one of a three part interview with a Nation member who tested positive for COVID-19 and has since recovered. This is the final part of that interview.

Me and my mom, we talk about it and what we went through, our experience, there's things that she didn't remember. She didn't remember being sick, the things we had to do for her because she was sick or why she wound up in the hospital. She comes to me she says, "You were the one who is taking care of me?" I said, "Mom, I didn't leave your side."

It's out there. I went in total isolation. I didn't get on social media. I hated listening to the news. My faith became stronger, I prayed every day, I prayed for everybody, and I prayed that nobody had to go through it, especially my family and friends. I wasn't expecting this, I wasn't out and about, I couldn't, we were having new babies being born in our family. I knew that I couldn't afford to get sick, to risk my family's life, to risk the people that I love, especially our elders. You have to be that person that helps society and want to eliminate COVID. If you don't do your part, it's not going to go away, people who don't take it serious, they're selfish, because their wants [are] more important than their loved ones and their families. Like I said, I didn't want anybody else to go through what we did. With three family members having to go through it and losing the life of one to COVID, it was hard.

I tell the young kids, the rules are there, you need to follow them. As an adult, you still need to follow the precautions because, as adults we're the ones who are supposed to be leading the young and letting them know there's reasons why things are [in place]. COVID is the devil, it was lurking, and it's still lurking out there, ruining lives, innocent lives that don't want this or weren't asking to contract this disease or illness. So go home, take care of yourself, stay home, don't go nowhere, don't complain, just abide by the rules. There are negligent people, people who don't care. One loss of life in our family was the worst. It took a toll and it made us, as a family, come closer and do our part. Your life matters, and your loved ones' matter, they need you. You don't want to risk the life of others, especially your children, your mom, your dad, your friends. Do something, be the better person and do things right. Life is too precious, it made me wake up. It made me realize what life meant to me because that was one of the hardest fights that I had to go through.