



# The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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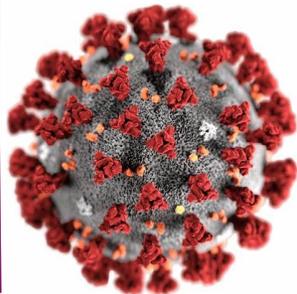
November 2020

**W**elcome to the November 2020 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the FYC. For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC were asked “What do you look forward to the most when the pandemic it is over ?” This topic allowed members to share their thoughts on what they would like to do when all of this is over. We hope you will take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to learn about our experiences and enjoy our thoughts and opinions in this edition of *The Noodle*!

### Current Members:

John Baldino  
Shevie Barnes  
Derek Carraway  
Alexander Gonzalez  
Leah Gorman  
JJ Humphrey  
Emma Massey  
Dakota Smoot  
Josh Tapia  
Christina Waldron  
Serena Wetmore  
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Youth Advisor

# PANDEMIC



## What I Will Do When the Pandemic is Over!

I know it has been a rough patch during this pandemic, with the toll that it has taken in everyone's life. Without a doubt, this pandemic will end, and hopefully, once this crisis is over, we can all get back to normal. For myself, I would love to go back to college and see my friends and colleagues, go to the beach, and maybe go to The Family Cafe and meet up with all my Council members. There are a plethora of ideas and opportunities, but I must make sure I focus on my priorities. Do not get me wrong, I do miss going to the movies, going to theme parks, going to the beach, etc. I can go to all these places, but with the current pandemic going on, it is still a setback. It is not because I don't want to go anywhere, but with cases of COVID still rising every day, it prevents me from even leaving the house sometimes. I understand that not everyone does not like to be stuck at home all day. I miss those moments where I could go out with my friends and spend quality time with my relatives. Regardless of how our current climate has molded so many people's lives, we still have a duty to do the right thing. I have always worn a mask whenever I go to public places. It is my responsibility to make sure I keep my family safe and my health safe. My health comes first, and whenever the time may be when everyone has recovered from the virus and no longer must wear a mask then we will not have to worry about this crisis anymore. In the meantime, I must make sure I do my due diligence to stay healthy and stay safe.

*By Alexander Gonzalez*



## Post-Pandemic Plans

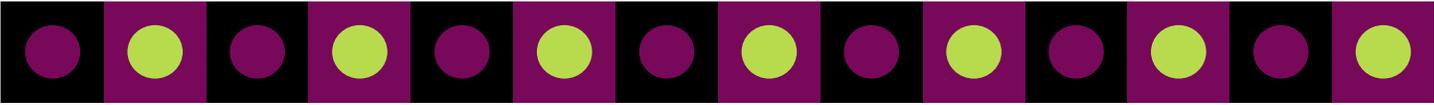
There are a lot of things I am looking forward to doing once the pandemic is finally over. I would love to go to the beach, the store, or maybe a football game to name a few things. OK . . . I can technically do all those things now, but one thing that will be nice to be able to do again once the pandemic is over is gather with my fellow FYC members. Due to the pandemic, we all know by now that The Annual Family Café was transitioned to a virtual event, and our Annual Youth Summit has been now too. That is two times we usually get to gather in person that we were not able to this year. We have continued to hold our monthly calls via Zoom, but it is not the same. So, I look forward to next summer when our usual FYC/Family Café activities can get back to some normalcy. It's the Council that brought us together, but several of the members are friends and enjoy hanging out once the business of the day concludes, so to speak LOL, and that's why it's something I'm looking forward to once the pandemic is behind us.

*By Derek Carraway*



## Life Post COVID . . .

There are too many things to list that I look forward to after COVID, but the things I most look forward to are The Annual Family Café and the FYC's Youth Summit. I miss being able to go to the places I call home. I miss being able to see the faces of people that I only see once, or maybe twice, a year: the friends and families I met over the years and have come to care about. I miss speaking directly to the youth who come to our FYC sessions at The Annual Family Café. I miss the dances where everyone is so warm and welcoming to everyone else, a place where I feel like whoever you are, you will be included. Most of all I miss going to a place where I feel like I belong.



Another thing I miss is going to college classes at my local campus, getting to know new people, making new friends, and giving my parents a well-deserved break from me. Just kidding! (Sort of.) It has been a long time for us all to be home together. I miss talking to my professors in class, in person, and NOT through a screen. I look forward to learning from them, as well as sharing my knowledge about who I am and about my disability. I miss hanging out with my friends after class and being in Student Government, where I feel like I am a valuable member of the team.

So, I guess what I look forward to the most is just getting back to a normal life!

*By Serena Wetmore*

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## **What I Am Looking Forward to Doing After This Pandemic**

I remember the last day of in-person school like it was yesterday. Before the world changed. I was in French class when suddenly my teacher came in, startling all of us and saying that we were all about to get shut down. This made everybody panic, and honestly, I did not know much about the coronavirus until then. But soon enough, school got shut down, all my activities at school got shut down, and soon quarantine began. What I am looking forward to when quarantine ends is going back to college and interacting with peers. I did not take school getting shut down by the coronavirus seriously when it happened, and I did not think school would get shut down for so long and I would see my friends again. That was a big mistake. When school got put online, I automatically missed seeing my friends and having that social interaction every morning. Even now, when I am doing online school or when I have a break there is nobody my age to talk to, and due to the virus I rarely go out anymore to see my friends, because I want to keep them and myself safe even though places are starting to open back up. Along with looking forward to seeing my fellow peers, I am also looking forward to interacting with my professors. To be honest, the reason why I am looking forward to seeing my professors again is because the way the professors do online teaching is not working because they take so long to answer back. However, when it is in person, the professors are spot on and respond right away. These are the things I am looking forward to after the pandemic is over.

*By Emma Massey*



## **I Cannot Wait!!**

Man, where do I start? This pandemic has shut down anything that seems routine or normal. From going to the movies to going to a theme park. From going out to eat with friends to walking Downtown Disney. These are all things that were taken away because of this pandemic. But you know what I miss. What I really miss above all? Anime conventions!! Yeah it sounds nuts and a little out of the ordinary but hear me out. From the cosplays to the guest appearances and all the way to the sale of all types of fandom, I miss conventions!

It feels like it has been years since I've last been to one of those events, and I just went last summer. I am a big fan of anything animated and live action with a good story and great setting. From a foreign flick to an anime epic, I'm a fan. The conventions allow you to mix and mingle with people you normally would not hang out with just because of the common interest of whatever you both are fans of. One of the best memories I have is walking into a convention with my white cane and people stopping me and complimenting my cane because it was designed to look like the one used by blind comic book hero Daredevil, whose everyday cane is black with the red tip, when the norm is white with the red tip. Oh, and his cane turns into batons or nunchuks!!

Man, I cannot wait for the return of conventions. Getting lost in all the things I mentioned is enough to drive you mad, but I know I am not the only one wanting to go back to their version of normal. We all need for our favorite things to come back . . . but I ask, what are you looking forward to the most?

*By Josue Tapia*

# THE 13TH ANNUAL YOUTH SUMMIT

A CONFERENCE FOR  
YOUTH & EMERGING  
LEADERS WITH  
DISABILITIES



## JOIN THE FLORIDA YOUTH COUNCIL AT THE 13TH ANNUAL YOUTH SUMMIT (AYS) ON NOVEMBER 13 - 14, 2020 IN ORLANDO!

The Annual Youth Summit is a place for **young people with disabilities between the ages of 15 and 30** from communities across the state of Florida to come together to learn, share, and network. This two-day event is hosted by The Florida Youth Council, a group of youth and emerging leaders with disabilities who have a passion for encouraging leadership and advocacy among their peers. The FYC is all about youth empowerment and youth involvement, and the entire Annual Youth Summit is planned **by youth, for youth!**

**The 13th Annual Youth Summit** will bring together over **200 youth** and emerging leaders to attend engaging youth-only sessions on a wide variety of topics, including transition, workplace preparedness, and post-secondary schooling. We also have a great, youth-friendly keynote and fun social activities planned for The Summit, including a dance party to cap off the festivities. There will be plenty of opportunities for attendees to network, and share their thoughts, experiences, and aspirations.

**The 13th Annual Youth Summit** will be held at The Florida Hotel and Conference Center in Orlando **November 13 - 14, 2020**. If you are not requesting financial assistance please contact The Florida Hotel and Conference Center directly at **407-859-1500** to make reservations. The room rate is **\$109 per night**. Limited financial assistance is available.

WE'LL SEE YOU THERE!



For more information  
about the event, or to register,  
contact **The Florida Youth Council** and **The Family Café**  
at **888-309-2233**, or visit **www.FloridaYouthCouncil.com**



## How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self-advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at [www.floridayouthcouncil.com](http://www.floridayouthcouncil.com). The program is open to application year round. We hope to hear from you soon!



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