

Seattle University

ScholarWorks @ SeattleU

The Spectator Online

Newspapers

11-19-2020

Seattle University Students from Hawaii Advise Against Traveling Due to COVID-19 Risk

Ashley Hagar
Seattle University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/spectator-online>

Recommended Citation

Hagar, Ashley, "Seattle University Students from Hawaii Advise Against Traveling Due to COVID-19 Risk" (2020). *The Spectator Online*. 408.

<https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/spectator-online/408>

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Newspapers at ScholarWorks @ SeattleU. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Spectator Online by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ SeattleU.



Seattle University Students From Hawaii Advise Against Traveling Due to COVID-19 Risk

Ashley Hagar, Staff Reporter

Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit the U.S. in March, the state of Hawaii has been suffering due to economic losses from a lack of tourism. Hawaii is one of the five most common states Seattle University students come from, and many students from the islands are gearing up for the increased travel with the holiday season approaching.

Students have shared their opinions on how the state of Hawaii is reopening to tourism. They are urging others to recognize the importance of protecting their home from the virus, therefore, not traveling to the island. However, because the state relies heavily on tourism, there are mixed views about whether or not visitors should be allowed to fly in and out of the state with Hawaii averaging 88 cases per day.



Colby Lane

In an attempt to reopen safely, Hawaii has created a pre-travel testing program that was enacted Oct. 15. The program allows visitors to be tested prior to traveling to the island, therefore avoiding the mandatory 14-day quarantine. Travelers are only able to do so if they receive an FDA-approved nucleic acid amplification test within 72 hours of their departure. They must provide evidence of a negative test result and have their temperature checked upon arrival.

While the State of Hawaii is opting to allow visitors, many locals are skeptical. Small businesses and workers in the tourism industry have suffered greatly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many are now unemployed or living paycheck to paycheck. Because of this, some locals want the economy to stay open in order to recover, but others do not want to continue operations, as it will increase the number of COVID-19 cases on the island.

Second-year nursing student Kela Ziegner stayed home this quarter on the island of Oahu. While attending classes, she has also been working as a restaurant server. At her job, she has experienced the effects of COVID-19 lockdowns firsthand, as they have been forced to shut down restaurants and nonessential businesses twice.

She explained how many people with jobs like herself have struggled to pay their bills due to the unpredictability of COVID-19. Ultimately, Ziegner wishes people had more respect for the island and its response to the pandemic.

“I am feeling very frustrated and saddened by everything going on,” Ziegner said. “Even though Hawaii opened up to tourists a few weeks ago, people should still not travel here for vacation. We only have a small number of hospitals, and people are not following the traveling rules or re-testing once they get to Hawaii.”

Other islands have also experienced the changes from lockdowns to slow reopenings as a result of COVID-19. Maui resident and second-year SPEX student, Noah Payne, elaborated on his experience with COVID-19.

Payne explained that he was on the island during the strict stay-at-home order over the summer, when residents were only allowed to leave their homes for necessities. After living in Seattle for fall quarter, Payne will return home for break following the recent pre-travel testing program. He shared his frustrations with how people are handling COVID-19 and traveling to Hawaii amid an ongoing pandemic.

“Some people still think that Hawaii is a good place for tourism amidst the pandemic, but it isn’t, because this virus isn’t a joke. Tourists need to be smarter with their actions because they put everyone in danger,” Payne said. “They just try to have fun, but the people living there are trying to stay safe and healthy. Everyone has to do their part to stop the spread, because that’s the only way that we stop it.”

Despite multiple lockdowns and economic losses, students from Hawaii manage to stay positive as they look to keep the locals safe and healthy. Meanwhile, on campus, the Hui ‘O Nani Hawaii club is working to keep up the energy and spirits of Hawaiian students.. Third-year marketing and management student and treasurer of the Hui ‘O Nani Hawaii club, Hamilton Keola, shared how they have transitioned during this time.

“Hui ‘O Nani Hawaii is still having virtual general meetings and events. We chat and play games, anyone is welcome! We are also still planning to host our annual lū‘au this year through video, and we are excited to continue sharing our culture with the SeattleU community,” Keola said. Students can follow the Hui ‘O Nani Hawaii club on Instagram @suhuionani for updates on their events and other ways to support Seattle U students from the island.