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Pandemic Profiles: Juliette Signoret, Artist and Champion

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The Pandemic Profiles

Juliette Signoret, Artist and Champion



Lauren Montoya [Follow](#)

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“I ’m a national champion, I’m a world champion,” says the black-belt karate student passionately, listing the aspects she most enjoys out of life, even throughout the quarantine

period.

Juliette Signoret doesn't just show off her impressive fighting skills in her beloved dojo with all her friends and instructors, she also expresses her love for sports, as well as singing, aspects she has explored while finding her calling throughout the unpredictable journey of life as a college student and young woman in an ever changing world.

Raised in the stylish Southern California city of Palm Springs, Signoret is a sister amongst seven other siblings. Her father is an alumni of Whittier College, a member of the Franklins society who played on the football team, which was a great motivator for Signoret in selecting her destination for college. In fact, her family's love for football had sparked a major interest of hers in becoming a journalist for ESPN.

Initially, her dream school was the University of Utah, where she got accepted, but Whittier offered her a scholarship, a major factor for many students when applying to college.

Another significant challenge that has emerged within the past eight months now is the COVID-19 pandemic, which has put all in-person instruction on hold, forcing students into the unfamiliar world of virtual learning.

Signoret describes the difficulty of returning back home from campus for online schooling, “Coming back to a big household full of kids that still need to grow up is super hard, because *everyone’s* online,” she says, explaining the hardships of balancing academic life now with home and social aspects as well. Signoret stresses the importance of maintaining mental health during such an unprecedented period of fear and anxiety. She knows of others who have been affected by stay-at-home orders while going to college.

“I very much feel trapped, but my household is big enough for me to at least have my own room.”

Despite being stuck at home most of the time, Signoret had adopted a love for splatter painting, a way for her to unleash an unrestrained amount of creativity. Another way she copes with being at home is karate, which is also her ultimate favorite hobby.

With 12 years of experience, and an active black belt currently on

her way to her second degree, it's a great activity to release built up frustration from quarantining. "I'm glad I get to release my anger that's pent up, because we are stuck inside," Signoret explains. She still gets the opportunity to attend her regular classes at the dojo, with social distancing and masks, of course.


The second-year Whittier College says she once wanted to be a singer, "Throughout high school, it was my thing," she explains, pausing briefly before continuing. "It's not that I got discouraged, I was tired of being forced to sing."

She recalls her family asking her to sing and express her voice, but once Signoret turned 18, she didn't want to be forced to sing anymore. She now says she sings for herself, as a hobby, giving herself a sense of confidence and independence as an individual.

"I like to do it for me. That's my biggest thing."







Signoret's job has also been affected, of course. She now has to wear a mask for eight-hour shifts and has to enforce new regulations for customers who refuse to wear one, or do so incorrectly. "You're always going to get that one Karen," she says.

Signoret recounts a rather frustrating experience with a customer who was wearing a mask incorrectly underneath their nose. When Signoret spoke up, the customer retaliated with a statement that has become popular among those against mandatory mask wearing: "This is America."

"This is a pandemic, people need to realize that," Signoret says.

Signoret understands the significance of being able to vote in her first presidential election at this time, with the possibility of the first woman of color as vice president, but the first presidential debate wasn't inspiring. "I felt it was kind of like child's play, like they were fighting over a toy."

“They put it on for show. It didn’t feel president-like. It felt like watching ‘Keeping up with the Kardashians.’”

Signoret is even more frustrated with the President’s lack of concern for climate change. “The way that the president dismisses it now is just completely insane,” she sighs. *“It’s literally happening around us.”*

Like most of us, Signoret was horrified by the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police and says she fully supports Black Lives Matter and is frustrated with the phony “All Lives Matter” pushback. “I was very touched, because he kind of set off the movement, for everybody to come out and fight for what’s right,” she says.

Signoret is equally frustrated by the lack of justice for Breonna Taylor, a young black woman who was wrongfully killed by police in Kentucky who were later cleared of most charges relating to her death. Signoret’s own experiences with being profiled have left an indelible mark. “I was terrified. I shouldn’t have to feel terrified,” she says.

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Voting is also away to push back against the inevitable confirmatio of Amy Coney Barrett. Ultimately, she believes, no matter what, it’s a woman’s choice to do what she wants with her own body, and nobody, especially men, should have a say in dictating laws that threaten to strip away reproductive rights.

“Our voices should be heard. How can someone have the right to choose for our bodies? It’s ours, not theirs.”

Juliette Signoret likes to fight for herself, not only physically in karate, but also for her own rights as an individual woman and for the freedoms of others in times of uncertainty and injustice. She’s her own artist. She’s her own champion.