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COVID-19 Vaccinations are Inherently Value-Added

One year ago today, we were alone. Sitting at home, fearing for our lives and the lives of those around us, uncertain of what lay ahead. First, it was a two week extension of spring break or a few extra days off work. It was a slight pause on life. Then, it was loss of lives, loss of jobs, loss of hope, and loss of control. The entire world took a deep breath and simply waited as everything we knew was turned upside down. While we were patiently, or impatiently, looking out the window and grieving all we had lost, thousands of people around the world were working diligently to restore hope and life. Now, a year later, we have millions vaccinated, businesses have reopened, and people have restored love and gratitude for the tiny, perfect, beautiful moments that make up this life.

As the scientists, researchers, test subjects, laboratory aides and hundreds of others have done their part, the supply chain industry is now playing an incredibly critical role in the distribution of the Coronavirus vaccine. When analyzing the supply chain process, our eyes are often drawn to the imperfections. What can we take away to ensure distribution or improve the overall process? Where can we save money by eliminating steps or removing minor aspects, while still delivering the same value or quality of vaccine? Reflecting on this past year, I would argue that there are no steps to this process that could be considered Non-Value-Added (NVA's) activities. The Coronavirus vaccine distribution, supply chain or not, is inherently value-added.



The distribution of the Coronavirus vaccine is monumental and historic. The months of research and testing trials have led us to this moment in time when distribution now widely stretches across the United States and across the world. No matter the steps, extra testing days, weeks between doses and more, none of it can be considered an NVA. According to the CDC's March update, over 143 million Americans have been vaccinated. The UK, Turkey, and Germany lead Europe in vaccine distribution, and my friend who has been teaching in Bundibugyo, Uganda recently informed me that their tiny, isolated district in East Africa received thousands of vaccines for distribution.

Any reasonable businesswoman or businessman could find areas for improvement. This is an important job of the business perspective; to find ways to make executive decisions that save money, increase profit, and maximize efficiency. Very few, if any, systems in this world are perfectly executed, but I view this particular vaccine distribution as more than a business initiative or deal. As I am not a businesswoman, but rather a young woman living and studying to pursue a medical career and am heavily involved in human physiology research, I can only address this essay question with the perspective of someone who has spent the past year grieving, hoping, and waiting. And now, I get to witness vaccine distribution daily through Gonzaga's campus vaccine clinic and through the Spokane Arena, just five minutes from my home. People of all ages, races, and walks of life gather in a communal space to cry tears of joy and smile for the first time with true hope for the future. I see my nurse friends administering



the vaccines, and I see a community filled with joy and relief. And to me, all of that, regardless of cost, is value-added.