College of the Desert Staff Use 3D Printing to Protect Healthcare Providers During COVID-19 Crisis

Heeding the call from local healthcare providers, College of the Desert staff are utilizing 3D printers to create face shields for local hospitals and healthcare facilities.

Jim Lilly, a computer support specialist at the College who is also a 3D printer enthusiast with seven professional 3D printers at home, was one of the first to respond to the crisis. He started making masks in early March.

"I am amazed at how the community has responded to work on this crisis. Thank you to Jim and College of the Desert for assisting in getting our medical facilities the supplies we need," said Dr. Ignacio Borensztejn, who spearheaded efforts in accepting and approving Eisenhower Health's donation from Lilly and the College.

Following Lilly's lead, three other College employees, Michael Gayle, Miguel Pena III and Jonathan Gorges have taken home 3D printers from the College and are volunteering to make additional face shields.

The new shields are being donated to John F. Kennedy Medical Center, Desert Aids Project, Blythe Post Acute and Eisenhower Medical Center.

"After surveying our local healthcare providers, we received requests for more than 1,000 shields," said Wendy Deras, MS, RN, Regional Director of Employment Engagement, Health, Inland Empire/Desert. "We are pooling our resources, using College supplies and those donated from the community to make 75-100 per day."

College of the Desert is continuing to serve its local community and has donated other PPE, including gowns, hair bonnets, gloves and shoe coverings to local healthcare facilities and the Desert Aids Project as well.
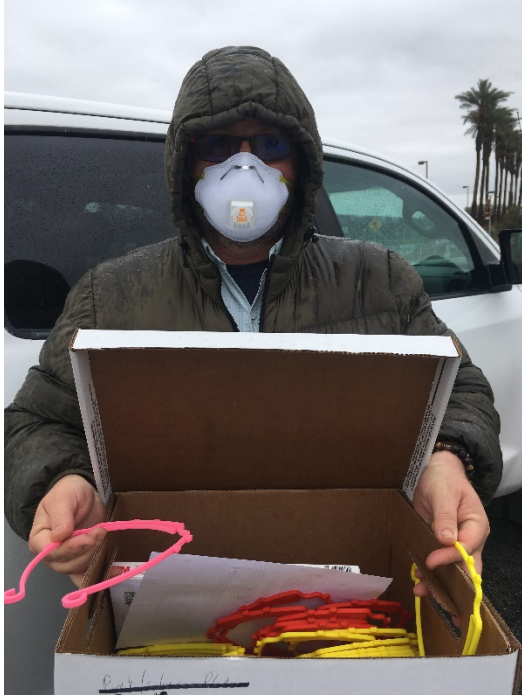
Photo Caption: Thomas Morrison, Emergency Preparedness Manager at Desert Aids Project, accepts a donation of 75 shields this past weekend.

Photo Caption: Jonathan Gorges, Instructional Computer Support Specialist, shown in his home office, with 3D printing mask pieces.

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