

Service Above Self

Holland Rotary Club and 3Dc19 Donate PPE

By Lucy Reynolds | Photos provided by Charles Elwood

As COVID-19 began to spread across the U.S. in mid-March, local business owner and Holland Rotary Club member Charles Elwood co-founded a new company—3Dc19—for the sole purpose of producing and donating PPE (personal protection equipment) to help in the fight. Charles and 10 other small businesses with 3D printers got to work printing face shield visors for frontline workers.

Four short weeks later, the pool of businesses with 3D printers producing visors had grown from 10 to 440, including companies from around the U.S. as well as Canada and Brazil. With donated injection-molded tooling, 3Dc19 was soon able to up their daily production of face shields from 800 to 3,000.

During those first few weeks of business, Charles was contacted by a similar organization in Puerto Rico—Makers Against COVID-19—requesting contact information for suppliers of clear plastic sheets, the primary material used to produce the face shields. After learning about the particular hardships Puerto Rico has experienced during the pandemic, Charles and Holland Rotary Club members initiated a special project to send 10,000 clear plastic face shields to Puerto Rico for their frontline healthcare workers. (As of this writing, 6,600 face shields have already arrived safely at the airport in San Juan—and another 3,300 are complete and awaiting shipment.)

After a few weeks of producing face shields, 3Dc19 also began printing ear savers (to be used with ear-loop masks). In addition, Charles was contacted about a possible new venture: producing reusable fabric masks. Gentex executive and Rotarian Sue Franz had already been sewing hundreds of masks at home in the evenings and on weekends, but the coordination of requests, packaging and shipping was becoming a bit overwhelming.



Agencies Helped

616

Printers, Sewing Machines, Lasers

468

Hand Sewn Masks

3,711

3D Printed PPE

57,771

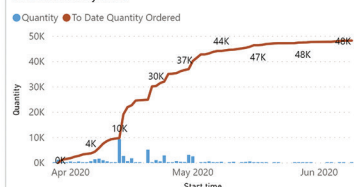
Injection Molded PPE

19,900

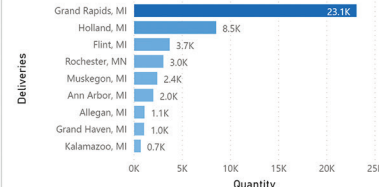
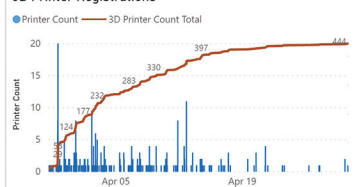
Hand Sewn Masks, Face Shields and Ear Savers

Report By: SolisMatica

PPE Orders by Date



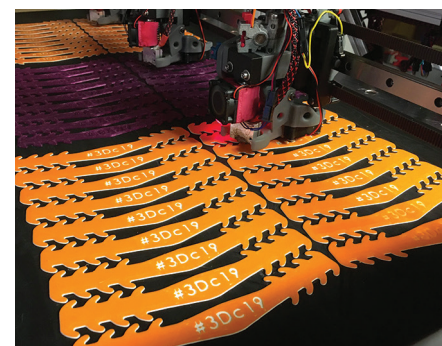
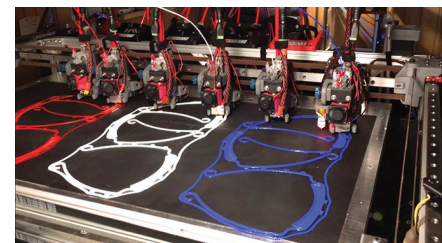
3D Printer Registrations



Of course, 3Dc19 was quickly on board with the idea, and the company worked with Sue to assemble a group of about 20 volunteers—including several Rotary Club members—to sew masks. In the last few weeks, the 3Dc19 “Sew Shop” has produced and donated more than 3,700 reusable fabric masks to various groups, including Breakfast with Baby in Holland and the Migrant Resource Council for agricultural workers in Ottawa and Allegan counties, as well as a Native American reservation in South Dakota.

“The work from 3Dc19 and our distribution center coordinator amazes me!” Sue shared. “The project is rolling at lightning speed, with volunteers signing up, supplies donated in, masks donated out and distributed, collaborations set up with other organizations.... It is truly a blessing to have this wonderful group of people to work with.”

“This has definitely been a community effort,” Charles emphasized. “We’ve had a ton of support from businesses and volunteers. Locally, Allthread



Ink in Allendale donated 700 cotton towels. Haworth donated hundreds of yards of fabric—as did Alabama-based Spradling USA, after being contacted by a former employee: Holland Rotary Club member and Best Version Media publisher Patrick Avery. Haworth and Omni Tool and Engineering have helped with shipping and logistics.”

“The Holland Noon and After Hours Rotary Clubs donated \$3,000 toward these projects,” Charles continued, “in addition to the time and energy of many volunteers. We’re especially grateful for Rotarian Liz Hoffswell, who has coordinated the mask sewing project with amazing skill and organization.”

All in all, since its founding in mid-March, 3Dc19 has produced and donated face shields, ear savers and hand-sewn masks to more than 600 organizations, including hospitals and urgent care centers, nursing homes, dentists and oral surgeons,

mental health care providers, birthing centers, babysitters supporting front-line workers, ASL interpreters, hospice and in-home care givers, manufacturers, food service workers and other small organizations and nonprofits.

“We want to protect and ease the pain for the people helping to protect and save us,” Charles summarized, “and we want to protect and ease the pain for the people going back to work to make products to support our economy. One of Rotary International’s official mottoes is ‘Service Above Self,’ and these PPE projects have enabled us to serve locally, nationally and internationally.”

To learn more about 3Dc19, check out this video created by Charles Elwood at https://youtu.be/4_n-c9faD9U. For information about how you can get involved, visit the company’s website at 3Dc19.com.