



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HAWTHORNE HIGH SCHOOL OF MANUFACTURING & ENGINEERING PRODUCES PPE FOR FRONTLINE HEALTHCARE WORKERS**

Our Hawthorne High School of Manufacturing & Engineering (HHSME) coordinator, Lucas Pacheco, has been working with industry partners to figure out how our engineering labs and equipment can help support local PPE manufacturing needs, while creating a critical real-life learning opportunity for our students, who are working remotely through Distance Learning. Our labs have all the tools and resources to produce small items that can help our frontline healthcare workers and first responders.

There is an item that is in high demand for healthcare workers who are wearing masks for full 12-hour shifts and now in public. The item is called a surgical mask ear saver, which will prevent healthcare workers from injuries behind their ears from wearing the masks for extended periods of time. The item was tested on a group of nurses and yielded positive results. Because the results were so positive, more batches are now being produced every day. The initial batches were distributed to Kaiser Permanente in Harbor City, who received 100, and Long Beach Memorial, who received 150.

Through our partnership with the South Bay Workforce Investment Board, they have coordinated for South Bay hospitals in need of these items to receive them, including Centinela Hospital, who received 165 ear savers. This week, a batch of 200 was delivered to Torrance Memorial Hospital, 175 to Little Company of Mary Hospital, and 50 to Hawthorne Police Department. More batches are being currently being produced for additional distribution, with face shields on the way. The Office of the President at Centinela Hospital said, "The mask extenders are a huge hit! Please thank the School of Manufacturing & Engineering! What a wonderful and generous donation!"

As part of our HHSME Distance Learning, a group of students are maintaining the machines remotely, optimizing production, and monitoring the quantity of materials we currently have. They are overseeing production and estimating when we will need more materials. "It's an honor to have the opportunity to help my community in these difficult times" said Cameron Hartley, HHSME senior. "I'm one of the students that has been helping maintain workflow in our engineering labs. It's difficult, no doubt, helping maintain and use machines from a distance, but I've been learning as much as I can to help out. We've started with 3D printing the ear savers to make our healthcare workers more comfortable while they work, preventing damage or pain behind the ears, and now we're designing and testing face shields to assist in the shortage of such products. We hope to see our efforts help flatten the curve, and are prepared to keep up the effort."



The HHSME has joined the SoCal Makers COVID-19 Response team, a coalition of over 100 volunteers from the state of California and other states that have *FIRST* Robotics students, college engineering students, makers, and professionals, aimed at creating Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for hospitals. HHSME is now gathering materials through the coalition to start manufacturing protective face shields. The face shields will be distributed, along with the surgical face mask ear savers, to local hospitals.

The South Bay Workforce Investment Board provided funding to purchase more materials, so the HHSME can now manufacture over 2,000 additional ear savers and to begin producing face shields.

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