



Medina County Auditor

HOMETOWN HERO

Printing up a solution

Brunswick teen spends free time manufacturing face shields ear guards for emergency personnel

By Melissa Martin



BRUNSWICK - When 16-year-old Shaun Durken's parents bought him a 3-D printer this past Christmas, he never imagined that within weeks he'd be using the device to save lives.

But when COVID-19 came knocking this past March, bringing with it the need for more personal protection equipment throughout the healthcare industry, the Brunswick High School sophomore was one of several volunteers across the

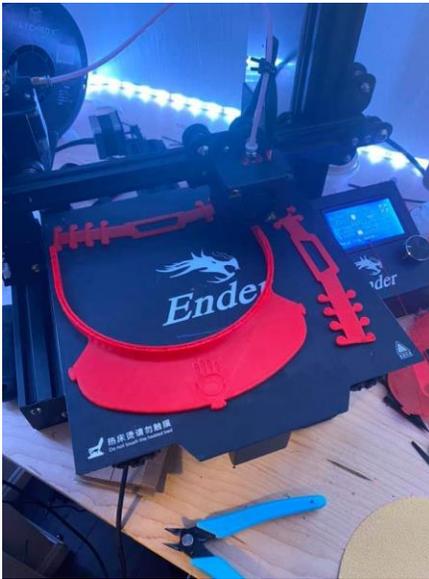
state of Ohio who stepped up to answer the call for help without hesitation.

"I read an article online that said that healthcare providers were going to be very short on face shields and other protective gear," Durken said. "It said that some of it could be made using 3-D printers, so I started looking into how I could make it."

Durken said that soon after telling his parents that he wanted to join in the fight, he learned about a nonprofit prosthetics company in Columbus that recently had shifted its operations

from crafting prosthetic devices made from eco-friendly materials using 3-D printers to making face shields for the healthcare industry in light of the coronavirus crisis.

The company, Form 5 Prosthetics Inc., developed a template for reusable visors that function as a shield to create a physical fluid barrier between healthcare employees and their patients, providing protection from both sneezing and coughing.



Along with the shields themselves, the company also produces plastic ear guards the face shields can connect to in an effort to keep elastic bands from rubbing against the ears of the person wearing the mask.

Because the process of producing the face shields and the ear guards is a time consuming one, Form 5 Prosthetics Inc. elected to share its template with volunteers and other

small companies throughout the state who have signed up to produce the PPE from their homes and businesses over the past month.

Once the volunteers, including Durken, complete the masks and ear guards, they are packed up in boxes and sent to Form 5 Prosthetics Inc., which finishes the assembly and sanitation of the equipment. Once that process has been completed the masks are then donated to hospitals, medical centers, police and fire departments and to other emergency personnel in need nationwide.

Through trial and error, Durken made his first masks last month and, to date, he alone has manufactured and shipped approximately 20 masks and 40 ear guards using printing filament he purchased himself to print the equipment.

In total, it takes approximately 3.5 hours to print just one face mask and two ear guards with just one printer, Durken said.

Though the work isn't difficult, it is time consuming, Durken admits. However, in light of the growing need for PPE nationwide, he says it's time he's willing to give.

"It feels good knowing I'm able to do something little that's helping to make a difference," he added.

While he's already made a significant contribution to the cause, Durken said he plans to keep printing, with a goal of making at least 20 masks a week.

"I plan to keep helping until they no longer need them," he said.