

250 new silicone masks donated to health care workers at Augusta University

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AUGUSTA, Ga. (WJBF) — There is still a major PPE shortage across the nation. Prices are increasing, and supplies are taking months to deliver. Now, there is a new concept to make sure the clinical staff at Augusta University have the protective equipment they need.

"They can have a personal mask and use them every day," said Board Certified Medical Illustrator. Lynsey Ekema. "They can clean it themselves, they can follow the hospital's protocols for decontamination, and the silicone can even be autoclave to a certain temperature."

Staff members from the [Center for Instructional Innovation](#) at AU wanted a mask that could be reusable, comfortable, and easy to clean.

"We evaluated the Montana mask design, which was developed at the University of Montana," said The Program Director, Amanda Behr. "I took that mask and created a 3D-printable mold that can be filled with silicone."

AU Health care personnel are calling it "[The Montana Behr Mask](#)." Behr says they needed to be mass-produced. That's when Solvay and AOPI stepped in, creating 250 silicone masks.

"Within a few days, they had solutions," explained Behr. "They had 3D-printed molds that were mass-produced. We didn't know how we were going to meet that need, and it was incredible to see the support from different members of the community."

The filter in the masks is what nurses use to wrap the

surgical trays when being cleaned. One layer is like an N-95 mask. One nurse says they went through several prototypes and critiques to come up with the final product.

“We came up with all these materials and substitutes for things we couldn’t find,” said Leigh Stanford. “It has been wonderful to see the mask starting at this hard plastic-shell, to these our new mask come in from Solvay.”

Stanford says it’s a breath of fresh to see people joining forces to help protect those front line workers.

“It’s been wonderful to see our community step up and say we support you, we think you’re valuable, and we want to protect you so you can protect us,” said Stanford.

The Montana University Design ([Click Here](#)) is available to

the public for free.