



## On the Bright Side: A Wearable Thank You for Nurses

May 07, 2020 | Laurette Hankins

Laurette Hankins, UMSON associate dean for development and alumni relations, makes bracelets with her grandson to thank UMMC nurses during National Nurses Week.



A couple of weeks into Maryland's stay-at-home saga, I got a message from my 9-year-old grandson, Ian, saying that he was, in essence "taking orders" from relatives to make personalized bracelets for \$1 each (a new virtual twist on a kid's lemonade stand). That got me thinking: What would I want my bracelets to say? Whom did I want to thank for something?

NURSES! Of course! And with National Nurses Week coming up, it seemed like a win-win.

I asked Ian how many bracelets he could make to thank nurses. He figured maybe 25 or so. I told him that I would try to make 50, and that I would get them to some of the nurses working with COVID-19 patients at the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC). He really liked that idea!

So that's how it started. I sent him more block letters and elastic string, and we both worked diligently (in our spare time) to make this happen. Each of the 50 bracelets that I made said "Thank you Nurses," with a couple of hearts, and other colorful beads. I found out that it's pretty hard to make bracelets thanking nurses when you run out of the letters "N" and "R"! Ian was very creative in the various "thank you" combinations he used.

After a few weeks, when I felt confident that we could actually pull this off, I reached out to Dr. Lisa Rowen, an alumna of the School of Nursing and a member of our Board of Visitors. Lisa is the chief nurse executive for the entire University of Maryland Medical System and chief nursing officer for UMMC. As busy as she is, she answered my email within just a couple of hours, saying she loved the idea!

I FedExed 75 bracelets to Lisa and am so excited thinking about bringing a smile to 75 amazing nurses. They are working so hard, with such courage and dedication — we just wanted to send a little tangible token of love and appreciation their way.

*UPDATE: Dr. Rowen received the bracelets and wrote, "Dear Laurette and Ian, I received your wonderful bracelets for the nurses of UMMC today. They are fabulous! We love the bright colors and messages of thanks. Your thoughtfulness and generosity of your time and treasure in honor of front-line nurses is so greatly appreciated. I know the nurses will love the bracelets and wear them proudly!"*

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