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HELPING HANDS: USING OUR 3D PRINTER TO MAKE FACE SHIELDS FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS



- April 2, 2020
- [Baltimore, Community](#)
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Editor's Note: This post is part of a series of [Helping Hands](#) stories authored by School of Pharmacy faculty, staff, students, trainees, and alumni who stepped up to assist their family and friends, colleagues, and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

My husband and I own several 3D printers because we run a 3D printing Etsy shop. We saw on Instagram that Open Works, a studio space in Baltimore, was working on producing face shields to help with the shortage of personal protective equipment for health care workers. Open Works found an open-source design of a face shield that consists of a plastic shield that is laser cut and 3D printed parts that sit at the forehead and at the bottom so the mask retains its shape.

Open Works has enough laser cutters, but only has 13 3D printers, so they put out a call on social media to ask for volunteers to print and donate the 3D printed parts. My husband is the one with the 3D printing expertise, so he got to work setting up the prints. There were extensive instructions on how to sterilize the 3D printer, handle the printed pieces once they are complete, package them, and drop them off.

The first few attempts kept failing several hours into the print. Finally, after three failed attempts and making some adjustments to the printer settings, he had a successful print. We started churning them out. The 3D printed parts for each face shield take an average of six hours to print. We decided to make them orange and purple for Baltimore. Open Works has hundreds of volunteers printing the pieces for them, and their goal is to assemble 500 hundred face shields a day that will be made available to local hospitals. We dropped off our first batch of pieces on Tuesday and were happy to see that their mailbox was overflowing with donations. [Here's a video](#) about the process. We are printing more and are hoping to do another drop off soon.



[Helping Hands: Volunteering at the Food Bank](#)

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