

GPO Teammate 3-D Prints Face Shields for Maryland Hospital During COVID-19



GPO IT Specialist David Thibodeau has delivered hundreds of PPE items to Holy Cross Germantown Hospital to help protect healthcare workers.

"I have a number of friends in the medical field, and I used to work in the medical field," said GPO IT Specialist David Thibodeau, who worked at Mercy Medical Center prior to joining GPO in 2017. "Knowing what our healthcare workers are going through during this pandemic made me want to help."

Thibodeau works in GPO's IT department maintaining software distribution, deploying system updates, and maintaining systems. He says he became even more inspired to 3-D print face shields and surgical mask tension release bands when his parents became quarantined on the Grand Princess Cruise Ship toward the beginning of the coronavirus outbreak.

"I was really inspired by the effort that went into keeping my parents safe and bringing them home," said Thibodeau. "At that point, I knew I wanted to help out where I could."

After reading about people printing out ventilator parts in Italy using 3-D printers, Thibodeau says he realized he could use his 3-D printer, the Prusa i3 MK3, to print out Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for hospitals. He turned to Google to find hospitals near him and reached out to them to see what he could do.

Holy Cross Germantown Hospital, a hospital just five minutes away from Thibodeau's house, responded and asked if he could produce face shields for their medical workers to wear over their face masks for added protection. Thibodeau immediately found some models online, ordered materials, and got to work testing out prototypes. By day, he was doing maintenance on GPO's IT systems, and by night and weekends, he was printing as many face shields as he could. It took him about 4.5 hours to produce each shield. Thibodeau also began

to print surgical mask tension release bands that remove tension from behind the ear and make the masks more comfortable to wear.

He delivered the shields to Holy Cross Germantown multiple times a week beginning on April 10, 2020, and will continue to print them until he is told the hospital no longer needs them.

In total, Thibodeau has delivered 198 face shields and 357 bands to Holy Cross Germantown as of June 1, 2020.

"Kudos to Mr. Thibodeau for volunteering to create face shields for those risking their lives on the front lines," said GPO Director Hugh Nathaniel Halpern. "His work alone will make a difference in combatting COVID-19. His 'get-it-done' attitude is a great example for others on the GPO team and throughout the community of how we can each take initiative to help our Nation get through this pandemic."

"These face shields are going to keep our colleagues safe as they care for patients



Face shields like the one Thibodeau is wearing help provide an added layer of protection from droplets that may cause coronavirus transmission.

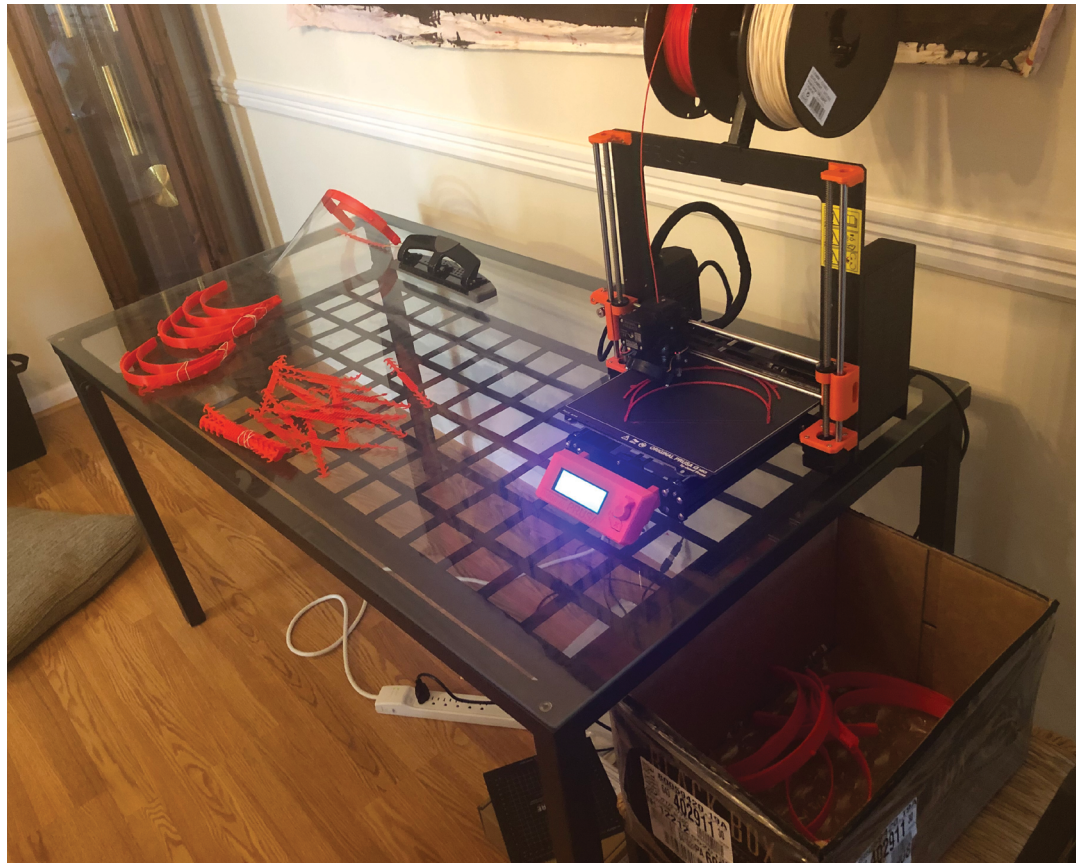
who have COVID-19,” said Dr. J. Gregory Jolissaint of Holy Cross Germantown. “We thank David for the time and effort that he put into it.”

Thibodeau purchased his first 3-D printer in 2016. Prior to using his 3-D printer to help healthcare workers, he printed things like art and small models of the moon for fun.

“I find it extremely interesting that you can download almost anything you can think of off the internet and 3-D print it,” said Thibodeau. “You can print movie characters, buildings, anything. It’s really neat.”

And, thanks to his desire to do his part, Thibodeau turned his hobby into a skill that has helped local healthcare workers stay safe.

Thibodeau has been recognized for his work in Roll Call, on ABC7, and on the Federal News Network podcast.



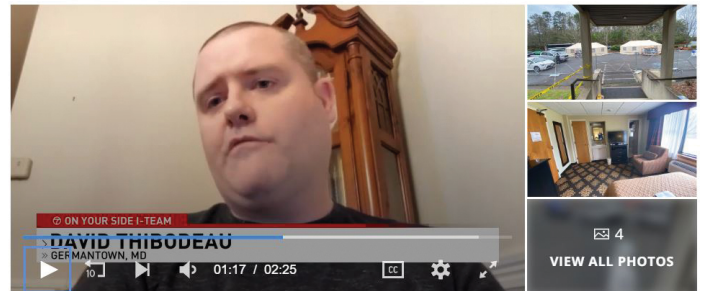
GPO IT Specialist David Thibodeau has been following 3-D printing since the technology was first developed. He purchased his first printer in 2016, and upgraded to the award-winning Prusa i3 MK3 in February 2020.



Via contactless delivery, GPO IT Specialist David Thibodeau drops his items in a bin at Holy Cross Germantown Hospital. The items are then sanitized prior to being distributed.

Parents' ordeal on quarantined cruise ship inspires son to help front line workers

by Scott Taylor | Wednesday, April 15th 2020



Thibodeau is interviewed by WJLA's Scott Taylor about his inspiration for helping local healthcare workers.