



Fullerton Observer

FULLERTON'S ONLY INDEPENDENT NEWS • Est.1978 (printed on 20% recycled paper) • YEAR 42 #7 • MID APRIL 2020
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Rotary Project Shield delivers face shields to St. Jude Hospital: Pictured above are Cisca Stellhorn (Irvine Rotary), Dan Ouweleen (Fullerton Rotary Project Shield Leader), Beth Fujishige (Irvine Rotary), Susan Ouweleen (Fullerton Rotary), Mike Cochran (Fullerton Rotary President), Brian Helleland (St. Jude CEO), Joe Lins (Fullerton Rotary and St. Jude Foundation Boardmember), and Marc Aarons (Rotary District 5320 Governor). See story on page 2.

Fullerton Rotary Face Shields for St. Jude

by Jane Rands

In a phone interview on April 5, Dan Ouweleen explained how Fullerton Rotary began making face shields for St. Jude Hospital staff and employees. Three weeks prior, the Rotary District Governor had asked, "What can we do to stop the virus (COVID-19)? What can we do to help?"

Ouweleen's first plan was to leverage his business connections with a factory in China to purchase N95 facemasks for St. Jude Hospital. But by the time St. Jude responded to the offer, the face-masks had been purchased by someone else.

Fellow Rotarian and board member for St. Jude, Joe Lins came up with another idea. Instead of buying masks, they could buy face shields for St. Jude.

St. Jude found a producer who could manufacture the shield materials unassembled for \$2 each. Rotary used a \$20,000 grant from their District Governor to begin their project.

Since then, Fullerton Rotary, along

with a total of 23 other Orange County and Long Beach clubs in District 5320, have raised over \$100,000 to purchase the manufactured supplies at cost, organize and train volunteers to assemble the shields, and deliver them to frontline medical facilities. The clubs that donate get to designate the medical facility or nursing home that will receive the shields.

With the help of OC United, they have had up to 200 volunteers at a time at locations in Dana Point, Mission Viejo, Anaheim, and two in Fullerton. They can assemble as many as 8,000 shields per day. The Fullerton sites are at PacMin and the Muckenthaler Cultural Center. In addition to Rotary-funded shields, PacMin is also assembling shields for medical facilities to purchase at cost.

The workstations at the assembly sites are sterilized according to medical standards as approved by St. Jude. The volunteers are physically separated, wear face shields and gloves, and have their temperatures checked upon arrival.



Volunteers at the Muckenthaler constructing face shields.

Ouweleen explained the benefit of a shield. It covers the wearer's eyes and is easier to breathe in than a facemask, but staff at St. Jude wear both. In the field, shields are not reusable without a means to disinfect them. All hospital workers are wearing them and they must be disposed of when contaminated. So far they have assembled 18,000 shields. They delivered 11,000 to St. Jude on April 7

and will be delivering more to St. Jude as well as to local nursing homes. Ouweleen said Rotary will "continue (to assemble and donate shields) as long as we have funding." To donate towards the cost of supplies or to volunteer to assemble face shields, go to <https://www.givsum.com/opportunities/rotary-project-shield>.