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Team Corona Busters Plans to Sew, Donate 10,000 Face Masks to Protect Medical Workers on Front Lines of COVID-19 Pandemic

Group's leader aims to build worldwide grassroots movement

VENTURA, Calif., (April 2, 2020) – The spread of the COVID-19 virus has spurred the need for personal protective equipment (PPE) for health care workers around the globe. This prompted Ventura resident Sheri Cecil to recently launch a grassroots campaign, Team Corona Busters, also known as Global Team Corona Busters. Cecil's campaign has one goal in mind: To build a worldwide movement in which people will sew and donate durable protective masks for those serving on the front lines of the pandemic.

Cecil and her daughter Eleanor Bakewell started Team Corona Busters on March 20 after Cecil had a conversation with her best friend who works as a nurse. "My friend is immunocompromised. She received one N95 mask for her shift. She has to wear a mask all day long and was afraid," Cecil says.

The discussion inspired Cecil to put out a call on Facebook to friends around the world, asking them to sew masks to aid doctors, nurses, and others who work at hospitals and in their local communities. The Saturday after Cecil created Team Corona Busters, she had a discussion with Ventura County Public Health and learned her city's largest hospital, Ventura County Medical Center, needed 10,000 face masks.

Cecil discovered these masks had to follow specific criteria for use in hospital settings as the Ventura County Public Health were fundamental in selecting the pattern choice since day one. "They needed simple cloth masks that could be worn by themselves and that can also withstand vigorous washing," says Cecil. Such masks get washed in an autoclave and more importantly, can help protect their users from infection via COVID-19.

Both Cecil and Bakewell grappled with making the first batch of masks. "It was an extremely steep and short learning curve," Cecil admits. "The first day, my daughter and I struggled to make eight. On Saturday, March 28, we made 80." They and other members of Team Corona Busters have so far donated more than 2,500 masks to Ventura County Medical Center, Ventura County Public Health and other healthcare facilities in local communities since launching the group mid-March.

Many people have joined Team Corona Busters, donating materials along with their time and talent to the movement. Group members come from across the U.S. and seven countries and have sewed thousands of masks for their respective communities.

"There are not enough masks to go around," Cecil emphasizes. "You can save a life by making a mask."

Those interested in donating materials or masks can learn more about Team Corona Busters by visiting <https://teamcoronabusters.org> or joining the Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GlobalTeamCoronaBusters>.

About Team Corona Busters

Team Corona Busters is a pending national nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to provide healthcare supplies across the globe during a public health crisis or catastrophic event. It started in March 2020 as a grassroots movement of volunteers coming together to make face masks for healthcare workers in need. Team Corona Busters provides these supplies at no cost to the recipients. Founding members include Sheri Cecil, Eleanor Bakewell, Wendy Tremiti and Paul Rycus.

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