

A Collaboration Protecting Those on the COVID-19 Frontlines

OSF HealthCare Newsroom

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The COVID-19 pandemic has stressed supply chains around the country, particularly when it comes to personal protective equipment such as masks and face shields for those caring for patients on the frontlines.

Headquartered in Peoria, Illinois, OSF HealthCare has 14 hospitals throughout Illinois and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. As the need for additional protective face shields grew, OSF turned to another Peoria-based company, Advanced Technology Services (ATS), a leading supplier of industrial equipment maintenance, and repair, for a solution.

The two organizations worked together to develop a lightweight, reusable, face shield, overcoming their own supply issues along the way.

SOT Eric Webb, VP & Administrative Officer, Pointcore, Inc., a division of OSF HealthCare

(We evaluated the situation with ATS and they said 'what do you think about a reusable face shield that can be cleaned and sanitized and you could have continuous use of it?' Frankly their engineers came up with a great solution for us to develop just that. I think what's great about it is, it not only provides longer utility of this product, it is more durable and safer for our clinicians, plus it's from this local solution that really helps us out. :33)

SOT Jason Power, Project Manager – Advanced Technology Services

(Once we were able to identify the three pieces that go into this we were able to work with our supply chain division and identify those pieces and how to get them here. We did run into some issues, initially, trying to get the right sizes, so what we were able to do is get a little bit larger sizes of some of the hook and loop and we were able to work with our internal engineering team to able to cut those down and really make sure that we didn't stop the production based off of not having the correct parts. :27)

After testing several prototypes, ATS began production of the face shields in early April. Ultimately, 15,000 face shields will be produced for use throughout the OSF HealthCare Ministry. While they have received inquiries from other health care providers, ATS says its first priority is meeting the needs of OSF HealthCare.

It's an expansion of an established relationship that both sides see having great potential for future collaborations. Eric Webb says the support from ATS and others throughout the communities served by OSF HealthCare has been invaluable in addressing the needs created by the COVID pandemic.

SOT Eric Webb, VP & Administrative Officer, Pointcore, Inc., a division of OSF HealthCare

(This has turned out to be solving an immediate need, but I believe what we've done is solve it in a better manner for a long term solution for OSF HealthCare. This is a more comfortable and better fitting solution than the disposable options, so I think there's real value to those that are wearing these all the time. This will be a long-term solution for us. I think we've totally changed our focus of how to utilize face shields going forward. :27)

SOT Jason Power, Project Manager – Advanced Technology Services

(As we work through and we build these facemasks, knowing on the other side how they're going to be used in taking care of the real heroes on the front line, that's incredibly important and really special to us. :13)

ATS brought about a half-dozen employees back from furlough to help with the mask manufacturing process, providing an additional boost to the local economy.