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More DTI SSF FabLabs manufacture PPEs for medical frontliners

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)-assisted shared service facilities (SSF) across the country continue to help address the shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) as health workers respond to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

FabLab Bohol



Members of the FabLab Bohol team prepare equipment for mass-producing protective face shields made from laser-cut acrylic plastic and acetate as a response to the shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) amid the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis.

One of the first fabrication laboratories (FabLabs) established in the Philippines has joined efforts to provide medical frontliners face shields amid a shortage in PPEs.

Launched last May 2, 2014 at the Bohol Island State University (BISU) with support from DTI, FabLab Bohol has since donated some 1,500 face shields for some 56 beneficiary institutions, such as the Governor Celestino Gallares Memorial Regional Hospital in Tagbilaran City, among others.

Currently, the five volunteers working on the face shields can produce about 72 pieces from a single sheet of plastic. With production in full steam, FabLab Bohol eyes mass-producing the industrial prototype made from the laser-cut acrylic plastic and acetate for health facilities in the greater Bohol area.

FabLab Siquijor

A college-based fabrication laboratory situated in Siquijor has started manufacturing protective suits, face masks and shields, and aerosol boxes to aid health facilities and other agencies facing equipment shortage in the province.



The FabLab Siquijor team tests out a protective suit made from polypropylene cloth, Velcro straps, and garter, improvised face mask and face shield made from cotton fabric, garter, filter paper, and iodized salt, and sheets of acrylic and pvc, respectively, and aerosol box used during the intubation procedure, made from acrylic sheets, 3D-printed PLA filament, and rivets.

Established at the Siquijor State College (SSC) in April 2016, FabLab Siquijor manufactures aerosol boxes, protective suits, and improvised face shields and masks. Basic training from Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) helped equip its 20-member team with skills for sewing garments.

“We have always encouraged those we have assisted to exercise their corporate responsibility and give back to the community in whatever way they can,” **DTI Assistant Secretary Asteria Caberte**, who pushed for funding the project, said.

With its current workforce, FabLab Siquijor can sew a single face mask and a shield within five minutes each, while its polypropylene suits take up to two days to produce. To date, the initiative has since provided local health centers and agencies with more than 1,500 face shields, 500 masks, two aerosol boxes, and one protective suit.

“FabLabs are still accepting donations of raw materials for the production of the PPEs.” Assistant Secretary Caberte noted. Since the pandemic emerged, providing additional equipment has been a joint effort among DTI-assisted fabrication laboratories across the country. *“Our frontline workers still need more of these especially now with the rising number of COVID patients and with the ongoing crisis.”*

This issue marks the third of the stories featuring DTI-assisted Shared Service Facilities that continue to manufacture PPEs for frontliners. For more information on Fab Labs helping ease the fight against COVID-19, check out our Facebook page at [DTI.Philippines](https://www.facebook.com/DTI.Philippines).