

# HN teacher, student make shields for medical staff

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DOLA — While school is closed throughout the state, a Hardin Northern teacher and student have joined forces to bring much needed personal protective equipment (PPE) to area hospitals.

Brian Reeves has taught band at the district for nine years and during the past two years also has been the Hardin Northern STEM teacher. A part of the classroom experience for his students takes place with the school's 3-D printer. When he was told by Andy Ayers, cafeteria manager, of a group on Facebook working to make facial shields through the printers, Reeves contacted the group and volunteered. He learned the dimensions needed to make the coverings acceptable for hospital use and the expectations they had of keeping them sanitary.

Reeves knew that Preston Grappy, a seventh-grader in the Hardin Northern band, had a 3-D copier at home and contacted his parents, Josh and Denise, to see if Preston would join him in the process. The teen didn't hesitate to volunteer. He was anxious to help in the battle against the coronavirus, but it also gave him something to do as he waited out the self-quarantine at his home. "I didn't have a lot going on," said Preston. "I knew Preston was good at this stuff," said Reeves.

He shared the needed files with Preston and together they began making the plastic shield coverings for Lima Memorial and Blanchard Valley hospitals. It took about two hours to make the coverings using the files presented to them, the teacher said, but Preston refined the files to cut the production time by a half-hour. "He was not just doing the printing, but refining the process. That's pretty cool," said Reeves.

In the week since the pair began the production, they have made 122 shields. The response from the hospitals have been positive, said Reeves. The shields also have been sent to some area medical facilities, Reeves said. "They are telling us, 'Keep them coming,'" he said. Preston said he plans to sign up for Reeves' STEM classes in the near future. He plans a future in agriculture, he said, perhaps using his engineering skills to design new farming equipment.