

Note to editor: photos and additional information available at [Dropbox-Mask the City](#).



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Winston-Salem Community Leaders Unite for Mask the City Initiative to Combat COVID-19

Health Officials Stress the Need to Continue Using Both Masks and Social Distancing

WINSTON-SALEM, NC (APRIL 21, 2020)—A broad cross-section of community leaders, including those from Novant Health and Wake Forest Baptist Health, joined Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines today to announce a new initiative called Mask the City to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in this area. The purpose of Mask the City is to provide everyone in Winston-Salem access to a mask and urge them to wear it as well as to continue social distancing for 40 days from April 22 through May 31. The masks will be widely dispersed throughout the community under the program.

William M. Satterwhite, III, JD, MD, Chief Wellness Officer at Wake Forest Baptist Health, and his team designed the mask in conjunction with Renfro Corporation. Renfro is manufacturing the masks, which are called the Nightingale™ WS Protective Mask.

As a thank you for the masks being developed in Winston-Salem, Renfro is offering them at a special price only available to the Mask the City initiative. Renfro has the ability to make approximately one million masks a week at peak capacity and has earmarked the first 300,000 masks for Winston-Salem. The first shipment of approximately 30,000 masks was delivered to Winston-Salem on Monday, April 20, and distribution is underway.

“I’m challenging every person in Winston-Salem to continue practicing social distancing and to wear a mask every time they go outside to help dramatically reduce the spread of COVID-19,” Mayor Joines said. “I thank Dr. Satterwhite and his team for their entrepreneurship, Renfro for its willingness to produce the masks as well as the leadership of our two local healthcare organizations, the business community, government officials, faith-based organizations and other not-for-profit organizations for uniting our city under the Mask the City initiative.”

“The tagline for Mask the City is ‘Wear a mask. Love your neighbor. Protect yourself.’ It is imperative that we all do just that for 40 days to protect our community and change our trajectory for this summer. The next 40 days are a critical time, and we must be diligent,” Joines said. “I am confident that the citizens of Winston-Salem will rise to the occasion under Mask the City. This is our time to shine for all of America to see as we adapt to a ‘new normal’ until a vaccine is developed.”

“We are grateful to Dr. Satterwhite and his team for their innovation and design, and we are pleased to partner with Novant Health, the City of Winston-Salem, and countless organizations and businesses throughout our area, to help keep those in our community safe and healthy,” said Julie Ann Freischlag, MD, CEO of Wake Forest Baptist Health

and dean of Wake Forest School of Medicine. “Over the past month, many hundreds of people in our community have selflessly come together and have devoted their time, energy and talents into helping us stay healthy. We are honored to join with them and build upon these grassroots efforts to show that we’re all in this together.”

“Our community has done a fantastic job of staying at home and flattening the curve,” said Jeff Lindsay, executive vice president and chief operations officer for Novant Health. “While masking won’t replace hand hygiene, social distancing and staying home, it’s another tool that we can use to keep each other safe. Mask the City will support our fight against the community spread of COVID-19 and help us get back to the people and places we love.”

Several of Winston-Salem’s businesses, not-for-profit organizations and the City of Winston-Salem have committed to purchasing large numbers of the masks to provide to their employees, and, in some cases, to their employees’ families and others. Mayor Joines estimates 60,000 or more masks will be made available at no cost to low-income individuals and other at-risk residents through a variety of community and faith-based organizations. A number of businesses, foundations, other organizations and private donors paid for the 60,000 masks.

To make sure there are enough masks for all local residents, the organizers of Mask the City ask that each person accept only one mask, even if offered masks by multiple organizations.

In addition, the masks will be available on Friday, April 24 for individual purchase at Lowes Foods on Robinhood Road, Reynolda Road and Peters Creek Parkway in Winston-Salem and at Lowes Foods in Lewisville, Bermuda Run and Kernersville.

“Mask the City demonstrates the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of our community. When you see government, entrepreneurs, businesses, not-for-profits and faith organizations all working together for the common good, it reminds us what it means to be a community,” business leader Don Flow said. “This virus affects all of us, and with all of us working together, I believe our Mask the City initiative will serve as a model for other cities and communities.”

Joines also thanked the more than 2,000 local citizens who have made approximately 27,000 masks through Project Mask WS to provide to healthcare workers and others throughout the community. “The selfless volunteerism of those who have cut and sewn masks in their own homes in recent weeks was part of the inspiration for the Mask the City effort,” Joines added. “The fact is we can use every mask that we can get our hands on, and I urge everyone to continue making masks. The need is enormous.”

The Winston-Salem Foundation has set up the Mask the City – Winston-Salem Fund that will be used to provide grants to qualified organizations (those otherwise meeting the Foundation’s guidelines and requirements) to purchase and distribute masks to residents of Winston-Salem and employees working at facilities in Winston-Salem. The primary focus will be on organizations assisting and reaching those with current incomes below the federal poverty guidelines, and a secondary focus will be healthcare workers.

Those who would like to contribute to the Mask the City – Winston-Salem Fund should go to wsfoundation.org/maskthecity on the Winston-Salem Foundation website to pay using a credit card. People may also send a check, made payable to The Winston-Salem Foundation with Mask the City – Winston-Salem Fund noted in the memo line. Checks should be mailed to The Winston-Salem Foundation, 751 West 4th Street, Suite 200, Winston-Salem, NC 27101. Each donor will receive a gift receipt/acknowledgement from the Foundation. Those who would like to request a grant from the fund should send an email to Lou.Doherty@teallcapital.com. The email should contain details about the organization, the requested number of masks, and who will be the intended recipients of masks.

Additional information about the Mask the City initiative can be found at maskthecity.com and on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @maskthecity. Nightingale WS Protective Mask product information is available at nightingalesafe.com.

Greater Winston-Salem, Inc. and the Winston-Salem Alliance have sent letters to their members requesting that they buy masks under the program. Greater Winston-Salem, Inc. also will work with Mask the City to provide access to masks to additional Winston-Salem small businesses.

To date, the following organizations have committed to either directly purchasing masks or contributing to offset the cost of making masks available to all: Abbot Downing, a Wells Fargo Business; Allegacy Federal Credit Union; Anesthesia Care Services; Bob King Automotive Group; City of Winston-Salem; Deere-Hitachi Construction Machinery Corporation; Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership; Excalibur Direct Marketing; Flow Companies; Flow Lexus; Forsyth County; Forsyth Technical Community College; Frank L. Blum Construction Co.; Front Street Capital; Greater Winston-Salem, Inc.; I. L. Long Construction Co. Inc.; Inmar; INV, LLC; Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton; Lowes Foods; Modern Automotive; Neill Group; Novant Health; Piedmont Triad Regional Council; Piedmont Triad Workforce Board; Quality Oil Company; Reynolds American; Sunshine Beverages; Teall Capital; Truist; Volvo Cars Winston Salem; Wake Forest Baptist Health; Wake Forest University; Winston Starts; Winston-Salem Alliance and WPDA, Inc.

About the Renfro Nightingale WS Protective Mask

Characteristics of the mask regarding fit and comfort include:

- High stretch, high memory lycra for comfort around the head
- Washable and reusable
- An enlarged area for the nose and chin that aligns with the contours of the face to create a larger “breathing pocket” for the wearer
- Snug fit on the face

The Nightingale WS Protective Mask is not a NIOSH (CDC) Certified N95 respirator or an FDA approved (class II) surgical mask. The Nightingale WS Protective Mask is a non-surgical face mask for use by the general public. It has not been approved or cleared by the FDA. However, the product is authorized for use by FDA under an Emergency Use Authorization for use by Healthcare Providers as Personal Protective Equipment to help prevent the spread of infection or illness in healthcare settings and by the general public to help slow the spread of the virus during the COVID-19 pandemic. This product is authorized only for the duration of the declaration that circumstances exist justifying the authorization of the emergency use of medical devices, including alternative products used as medical devices during the COVID-19 outbreak, under section 564(b)(91) of the Act, 21 U.S.C. §360bbb-3(b)(1) unless the authorization is terminated or revoked sooner.

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