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Manufacturing Engineering Department making face shields to supplement faculty protection this fall

July 16, 2020



The face shields made by the Manufacturing Engineering Department, shown above, are modeled after a design created at Georgia Tech.

Georgia Southern University faculty who want to add a layer of protection in the classroom during the COVID-19 pandemic will be able to do so with face shields made by the Manufacturing Engineering Department.

“Your first line of defense is obviously a mask, but putting a second barrier up can only help,” said Andrew Michaud, laboratory manager in the Manufacturing Engineering Department. “You might liken it to a castle with strong fortification walls, but some castles like to go the extra step and build a moat. Having that extra barrier is probably not a bad idea, especially for the folks who will see the greatest exposure level.”

Michaud said he was able to use multiple manufacturing technologies, including 3D printing, Computer Numerical Control (CNC) waterjet cutting and CNC laser cutting, to produce the face shields. The frames were either 3D printed or cut out of high density polyethylene. Michaud laser cut polyethylene terephthalate (PET) to make some of the transparent materials, but since PET is in short supply, he also used standard transparencies often found in overhead projectors.

“I really like the idea of using the transparencies because they’re readily available, and we already have plenty on hand,” Michaud said. “For the first batch I made 300, and we’re capable of producing about 40 units per hour as the need arises.”

Michaud and Daniel Cox, Ph.D., professor and founding chair of the Manufacturing Engineering Department, were involved in a project earlier this year to help the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University with producing face shields, so Michaud was able to facilitate production seamlessly.

It is more cost-effective to buy face shields from high-volume manufacturers, but because they may be in high demand and lead times can be long, Cox said engineering faculty and staff are ready to help.

“The Manufacturing Engineering Department is willing and able to help throughout the pandemic and can readily make face shields to fill in any gaps in the supply chain that may occur due to any surge in demand,” he said.

Tags: [College of Engineering and Computing](#), [COVID-19](#), [Department of Manufacturing Engineering](#)

[Private tutoring group providing opportunities to Georgia Southern students through pandemic, beyond](#)

July 16, 2020

Georgia Southern University senior Brittney Brown enjoys making a difference in the lives of young children. Through W.E. MOVE Tutoring Group, a nonprofit organization started by Georgia Southern staff member S. Marie Williams, Brown can do just that by tutoring and mentoring elementary school students.



Brittney Brown

“Being a part of W.E. MOVE helped me understand my importance as a young, educated Black woman,” Brown said. “I realized that I can truly make a difference for young children, especially in the education sector, one child at a time. It motivated me to pursue a Master of Arts in Teaching.”

Williams didn’t think she’d have to face the challenges of a pandemic when she started W.E. MOVE two summers ago. However, Williams and her Georgia Southern student tutors are gearing up to help elementary students virtually this summer in order to fight summer loss.

“I wanted to give those who were on track a boost and help those who were behind catch up as much as possible in the few weeks of summer vacation,” Williams said. “Two years ago, my son, who was in danger of being retained in the 3rd grade, made enough noticeable progress with tutoring for both principals and teachers to agree that retention was no longer the best option for him. Parents and grandparents were pleased to the point of urging us to continue the service throughout the school year.”

Before the coronavirus pandemic, W.E. MOVE served parents and students by offering two and a half hours of tutoring and homework as after-school care at Henderson Library on the Georgia Southern Statesboro Campus. Since March, Williams and the tutors have been working to move the service online.

Brown said her role as a tutor and site coordinator won't change much with the transition to online learning.

"I'll be performing the same duties, just virtually: monitoring student-tutor pairs, doing assessments, and creating and maintaining spreadsheets," she said. "To get prepared for this coming session, I practice using Zoom functions and check out the websites we will be using in advance; just to get comfortable with them, so I can smoothly navigate my way through the session with little hiccups."

Williams is working to recruit new sponsors for the organization's needs-based scholarships after the group's two biggest fundraisers dropped out due to COVID-19-related financial hits. Scholarships have helped cover registration costs for many students as more than half of W.E MOVE participants are considered low-income. She has also been applying for grants in order to be able to offer paid tutor positions and cover all scholarship applications. Sponsors have covered materials for this summer's tutor boxes and hardware expenses.



S. Marie Williams

"Students will receive a tutor box with four weeks of hands-on activities," she said. "Thanks to our material and fund donations, tutor boxes will be filled with all the supplies students will need to complete their work and projects. Tutors will be sent a mirror of these materials via mail so they can work to create alongside their students."

All of W.E. MOVE's tutors are Georgia Southern student-volunteers from a wide variety of majors. Brown said the nonprofit provides her and her fellow students opportunities to flexibly earn volunteer hours on campus during the summer.

Williams said she has received a lot of support from faculty and staff across campus to help recruit volunteers, who are encouraged to use unconventional methods to keep students engaged.

"Each tutor is constantly urged to be a problem solver and push the creative envelope as far as is necessary to solidify each concept," Williams said. "Whether it's using pool noodles to create a multiplication machine or sidewalk chalk to create hopscotch for site words, they're encouraged to do just that. We mean to be unconventional in our approach to education because our students are unconventional in the way they learn."

The biggest goal for W.E. MOVE going forward is to keep the students on track after losing instructional time due to the stoppage in face-to-face instruction at local schools and Georgia Southern, as many tutors didn't come back to Statesboro after spring break.

"In this time of uncertainty we don't know when our youth will return to full face-to-face instruction in school, but that doesn't mean they have to stop learning or lose our support," Williams said. "With the support of our Georgia Southern students and virtual technology, our little ones can recover from the month-and-a-half instruction loss and keep moving forward. Many of our students were already behind in certain areas, so we don't want to lose the progress we were making."

Even though times are uncertain, Brown and Williams are continuing to work hard and stay optimistic about the future of W.E. MOVE.

“In a perfect scenario we would be able to reconvene our face-to-face tutoring sessions,” Williams said. “We miss our students and our students miss their tutors. We hope that next year during this time we’ll be enjoying Friday field trips to the Macon Science Museum, Savannah Railroad Museum and Skidaway Island Aquarium as we’ve done for the past two years.”

For more information on W.E. MOVE, to sign up a student or to volunteer as a tutor, look for W.E. MOVE on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WEMOVE2018, Twitter at <https://twitter.com/WEmoveTG> or Instagram at [wemovetg](https://www.instagram.com/wemovetg).

Tags: [COVID-19](#)