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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Announces $6.5 Million in New Manufacturing Emergency Response Team Grants

Thirteen Projects Will Produce Masks, Hand Sanitizer, Gowns; Boost Testing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

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BOSTON, MA — The Baker-Polito Administration has awarded over $6.5 Million to 13 Massachusetts organizations to develop new products to assist in the response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The new grants from the Massachusetts Manufacturing Emergency Response Team (MERT) will expand the Commonwealth's work to drive in-state manufacturing of critical products, an effort which has produced more than 11 million pieces of personal protective equipment and other critical pieces as of September.

The new grants, announced during national Manufacturing Month, bring the total MERT awards to $16.2 million, and have spurred the production of critical items including N95 masks, protective gowns, hand sanitizer, and ventilators. Since its inception, the MERT has mobilized, organized, and operationalized the critical work streams that allowed Massachusetts manufacturers to pivot their operations to produce needed materials in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The new awards support infrastructure and workforce training efforts at each company, driving increased production from these 'Made in Massachusetts' manufacturers**.**

"The MERT program continues to identify and support successful 'Made in Massachusetts' manufacturers that produce Personal Protective Equipment for our front-line responders, business owners, and residents," **said Governor Charlie Baker.**"This program and the sheer output from these manufacturers has been central to the Commonwealth's fight against COVID-19."

"Our administration is pleased to support these capital and workforce training requests to ensure Massachusetts' manufacturing sector will continue to produce in the face of these tough economic times," **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.** "As we emerge from this public health crisis, our hope is that these new product lines spur job creation and drive growth for these companies, while also establishing new supply chains for our in-state purchasers of PPE."

"As the chair of the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative, I couldn't be prouder to support these grantees, and to remind people across the nation and world that we make things here in Massachusetts," **said Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Mike Kennealy.** "Not only has this new home-grown production of PPE benefited those battling this virus on the frontlines, but it has also contributed to our ability to safely reopen the Commonwealth's economy."

"The Commonwealth has the most educated and best-trained workforce in the U.S.," **said Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Rosalin Acosta**. "These grants will allow Massachusetts to tap into that unparalleled advanced manufacturing talent pool and help to provide the equipment that workers in industries across the Commonwealth are depending on."

Launched in April 2020 (/news/baker-polito-administration-launches-manufacturing-emergency-response-team-to-support-supply), the MERT grant program made its first set of awards in May 2020 (https://masstech.org/press-releases/baker-polito-administration-announces-grants-boost-production-personal-protective), when it provided $9.5 million to 15 Massachusetts organizations that are now producing masks, gowns, ventilators, swabs, and testing materials, as well as boosting the capacity to test these critical items. The MERT grants support the purchase of equipment, working capital, materials, and workforce development efforts with funding provided by a partnership that includes the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MassTech), Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, Commonwealth Corporation, and the Massachusetts Manufacturing Innovation Initiative (M2I2).

"The companies supported by the MERT have produced millions of pieces of PPE and set themselves apart nationally for the speed and efficiency with which they put these critical items into the hands of front line workers," **said Carolyn Kirk, Executive Director of MassTech.** "We've seen similar trends with our first set of grantees, who've taken the state funding and made huge gains in a short amount of time. It's been an honor to lead the MERT and to work with our partners to help these companies."

"The Life Sciences Center is proud to be part of this continued effort to provide the necessary support to manufacturers located throughout the Commonwealth," **said Damon Cox, Interim President and CEO of the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center.** "The MERT represents the Commonwealth's collaborative DNA in action as academic, industry, and government stakeholders remain steadfast in their commitment to work together to leverage resources and expertise to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic."

"Our grant programs are designed to provide workers with the skills they need for lifelong careers and today we are also providing a lifeline to our dedicated frontline workers," **said Commonwealth Corporation CEO and President Christine Abrams. "**This grant program has been critical to the Commonwealth's recovery from the impact of the coronavirus, while supporting the pivot of manufacturers impacted by the pandemic, bolstering the stabilization of the Massachusetts economy."

"AFFOA is proud to be working with the MERT and facilitating the strategic investments being made into manufacturing across the Commonwealth," **said Sasha Stolyarov, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer of Advanced Functional Fabrics of America (AFFOA).** "Our domestic manufacturing ecosystem is more robust and resilient today thanks to the forward-thinking vision of the MERT and the innovative spirit of our manufacturers."

Of the $16.1 million awarded through the MERT grant program:

- $7.2 million to support the development of protective masks (45 percent of the total);
- $3.2 million for COVID-19 testing (20 percent);
- $3.2 million for gowns (20 percent);
- $1.4 million for ventilators;
- $630,000 for testing of PPE;
- $341,000 for hand sanitizer; and
- $257,000 for support of materials/supply chain.

The MERT is a coordinated effort comprised of members from academia, industry, and government to address the urgent need for PPE to support health care workers on the front lines of Massachusetts' COVID-19 response. More than 900 companies from around the world submitted their interest to the MERT, including over 550 from Massachusetts. Of those, over 50 companies have made it through the program, producing hundreds of thousands of pieces of PPE and other critical items each week, totaling more than 11 million since the start of the pandemic. **Managed by MassTech** (https://masstech.org/M-ERT), the quasi-public economic development agency that oversees advanced manufacturing programs for the Commonwealth, the MERT was devised as an emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to assist manufacturers in targeted ways as the demand for PPE continues.

The 13 grants announced today went to the following Massachusetts organizations:

Grantee	Location	Amount	Description
Masks			
The Fallon Company LLC, in partnership w/ Shawmut Manufacturing	West Bridgewater	$2,772,688, with $44,000 for workforce training	Will use the funds to buy equipment for a locally-owned, vertically-integrated N95 mask plant in Massachusetts.
New Balance Athletics	Boston	$80,000 for workforce training	New Balance has pivoted from manufacturing athletic footwear to the production of masks, including at their factory in Lawrence. Their grant will fund workforce training to produce surgical masks.
Gowns			
CareAline Products	Danvers; Fall River	$101,250, with $80,000 for workforce training	Headquartered in Danvers and with manufacturing in Fall River, CareAline is experienced in innovating and manufacturing medical safety garments that are purchased by hospitals for vascular access safety. Their contracted manufacturing facility will produce reusable Level 1 isolation gowns.
Precision Sportswear	Fall River	$32,755	Precision's employees produce medical items for manufacturers including CareAline Products, AliMed, DM Medical Sommerfly, US Bedding, and American Players.
99 Degrees Custom	Lawrence	$80,000 for workforce training	A leading U.S. manufacturer of performance activewear apparel, 99 Degrees is pivoting to make PPE. The recipient of a previous MERT capital grant, the new funding will support workforce training.
Ventilators			
Transcom Scopes Inc dba Instrument	Westfield	$41,282.66	Transcom has over 50 years of experience making complex machined parts and has spent the last 20 years making small pieces for medical device OEM clients. The funding will help the company purchase additional tooling and fixtures to produce ventilator manifolds.

Technology Inc.			
Testing of Products			
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dept of Chemical Engineering	Cambridge	$142,224	The Rutledge Lab at MIT has been providing filtration efficiency testing services through the MERT since the beginning of the pandemic. A selected subset of their results has been posted online by the Mass. Department of Public Health since mid-April, and have been endorsed by the National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL), the testing lab of NIOSH.
Materials & Supply Chain			
Avila Textiles, Inc.	Dighton	$85,775.25, with $14,000 for workforce training	Since 1995, Avila hasproduced quality narrow woven fabrics. Their equipment and trained personnel enable Avila to produce over 3,000 different webbing constructions, meeting specifications of the U.S. government andforeign customers.
Industrial Polymers and Chemicals, Inc.	Shrewsbury	$150,000, with $8,000 for workforce training	IPAC has been in business for over 60 years, supplying fiberglass reinforcement to the abrasives industry, body armor components for first responders, DIY repair kits, and now PPE to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding is for a CNC cutting machine to produce isolation gowns, adding a second CNC machine to the facility.
COVID-19 Testing			
International Light Technologies	Peabody	$16,138	ILT is producing a real time test intended for the presumptive qualitative detection of nucleic acid from the 2019-nCoC in upper and lower respiratory symptoms. Funding will help ILT support the construction of an additional manufacturing work station.
Web	Marlborough	$2,563,102.55	Web Industries currently manufactures medical devices and

Industries, Inc.		with $80,000 workforce training	provides expertise in Lateral Flow Immunoassay as well as Rapid Diagnostic Test manufacturing. The funds will support the equipment, facility, and human resource requirements required to produce COVID-19 tests.
Hand Sanitizer			
Gloucester Bio (Tekkware Inc.)	Gloucester	$209,840, with $16,000 for workforce training	An FDA registered facility, Gloucester Biomanufactures and supplies yeast to ethanol distilleries. With their familiarity in handling and manufacturing ethanol, they are pivoting to the production of hand sanitizer.
Heritage Hemp, LLC	Northampton	$63,352.17	Heritage Hemp manufactures consumer products that utilize ethanol, which has made an easy transition to hand sanitizer. The award will support the integration of advanced robotics to expand manufacturing capacity.
High Purity Natural Products LLC	Southbridge	$52,500.00	High Purity Natural Products is FDA registered to manufacture and fill hand sanitizer in a variety of container sizes in bulk. This grant will support filling equipment.

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