July 29, 2021 | 12:45 pm

COVID-19 Updates

Unvaccinated individuals are at greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19. Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccines.

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Empire State Development Announces More Than $4 Million Awarded to Support Companies Producing Vital COVID-19 Pandemic Supplies

May 15, 2020

From New Technology Improving N95 Masks, to Ventilators and Vital COVID-19 Testing Supplies, these Products will be Produced in New York State

Empire State Development (ESD) today announced support for eight New York State businesses to produce needed testing supplies and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) related to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than $4 million has been awarded to help these innovative companies retool their business lines and pivot to manufacturing vital supplies for ongoing response and recovery efforts.

ESD Acting Commissioner and President & CEO-designate Eric Gertler said, "Many of the world's premier and most innovative companies are in New York State. ESD's support for these businesses not only answers Governor Cuomo's call for homegrown industries to assist with the state's efforts to combat the coronavirus but reflects the investment is being made to ensure that the State continues its record of smart growth as we recover and grow statewide."

In March, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo asked companies with New York-based operations to retool production lines in order to manufacture approved (https://esd.ny.gov/sourcing-covid-19-products-nys) COVID-19 critical supplies, such as ventilators, COVID-19 test kits, and PPE, including N95 respirators, surgical masks, disposable surgical gloves, gowns, face shields, and biohazard bags. Those businesses were to contact ESD.

The first eight companies awarded assistance to develop COVID-19-related products are:

Chembio Diagnostic Systems, Inc. – $1,000,000 – Suffolk County, Long Island

Chembio Diagnostic Systems is a leader in the development, manufacture and commercialization of diagnostic tests for infectious diseases. The investment will support company's efforts to refocus efforts on production of COVID-19 tests, hiring and training employees, purchasing of materials and expansion of injection molding tooling capacity. Over time, including payroll, capital expenditures, and working capital, Chembio is expected to invest a significant portion of its capital toward the production of COVID-19 tests.

New Lab – $1,000,000 – Kings County, New York City

New Lab, LLC., an engine for inventors, engineers and entrepreneurs, in partnership with Boyce Technologies and 10x Beta, has formed a new company named Spiro Devices, LLC., to research and develop a ventilator alternative device called the “Spiro Wave” that will automate a manual resuscitator, giving patients the oxygen they need while freeing up clinicians and conventional ventilators to meet the critical needs of the COVID-19 crisis. To address the unreliability of purchasing parts from China, this initiative is using a company called Teknic out of Victor, Ontario County, as a vendor to address global supply chain constraints. Spiro Devices will be supplying 3,000 Spiro Wave devices to New York City and is scaling production, product development and clinical trainings to meet market demands. Spiro Devices will invest more than $13 million in this project and create 90 jobs.

Strong Manufacturers – $600,000 – Erie County, Western NY

Strong Manufacturers has 40 years of experience in the medical supply chain and the manufacturing and distribution of PPE and sanitation products. The company will build out a clean manufacturing space in its existing Buffalo facility and will acquire and install automated, mask-manufacturing machines, implement production systems, and establish distribution protocols. The project will require a $2.7 million investment and at full ramp up Strong Manufacturers will produce 6.75 million masks per week, and 324 million masks per year, hiring an additional 18 to 24 employees to reach full capacity.

Bodi Energy – $560,000 – Tompkins County, Southern Tier

Bodi Energy will retool its Ithaca facility in order to initially produce N95 respirator masks. Bodi's masks will employ a patented Cornell technology expected to deliver a superior particle capture efficiency at lower pressure drop than conventional meltblown fibers and set a new standard of novel air filtration that allows for N99 and N100 ratings with significantly better breathability and comfort. Ramp up will include the purchase of machinery and equipment, training of employees, and setup and configuration of the manufacturing line. The masks are being fast tracked for NIOSH Certification over the next few months. The project will entail a $3 million investment which supports a team of 14 full-time employees and a manufacturing capacity of 60,000 masks per day or 15 million masks per year.

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Garment District for Gowns – $472,000 – New York City

Garment District for Gowns (GDFG) was launched in response to the critical need of medical gowns in New York State. GDFG has developed, manufactured and began the distribution of reusable, water repellent, non-woven medical gowns for doctors and nurses. To date GDFG has already provided gowns to over 31 health institutions including hospitals, nursing homes, EMT stations, & fire departments. Factories are located in Manhattan and Brooklyn. GDFG will invest more than $1.1 million, employ an additional 152 employees to reach full ramp up and will produce over 30,000 gowns per week.

Made in Midtown, Inc. – $250,000 – New York City

Made in Midtown is a boot, shoe and accessories manufacturer. The company will retool its 7,000 square foot factory to produce reusable and washable personal protection masks for adults and children. The project will entail an investment of $992,800 and a commitment to producing 70,000 masks total. Initially, the company will produce 1,800 masks per week, will hire nine more employees and producing 3,600 masks per week at full capacity.

LMD Power of Light Corp. – $175,768 – Monroe County, Finger Lakes

With 30-years of experience as a contract manufacturer, LMD Power of Light will use support from New York State to make Oxygen Treatment Helmets at its facility in Rochester. These non-invasive ventilation (NIV) devices are currently being used across Europe to improve the respiratory function in patients experiencing respiratory distress, who otherwise might be put on a mechanical ventilator. They are virtually non-existent here in the United States. LMD will start with a limited production of 125 Oxygen Treatment Helmets by July, and another 125 by mid-August, that will be quickly dispatched to hospitals that have already indicated interest in starting trials.

Autronic Plastics, Inc. d/b/a Clear-Vu Medical – $80,000 – Suffolk County, Long Island

Clear-Vu normally produces plastic components and LED fixtures for transit and healthcare. This company has designed and is building a cleanroom space to begin manufacturing face shields at a scale and is procuring and setting up automation, glue lines and conveyor assembly systems. Clear-Vu will invest over $200,000 for production and is already in contract to produce 6 million face shields per year with capacity to more than double that. This new business line will create 28 new jobs at full capacity. Their face shields have already been provided to over a dozen healthcare organizations, first responders, and medical distributors.

About Empire State Development

Empire State Development (ESD) is New York's chief economic development agency. The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits and other forms of financial assistance, ESD strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. ESD is also the primary administrative agency overseeing Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Councils and the marketing of "I LOVE NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information on Regional Councils and Empire State Development, visit www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov (http://www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov/) and www.esd.ny.gov (http://www.esd.ny.gov/).

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