

Camdenton LASER 3284 Robotics craft over 300 face shields for soldiers in Afghanistan

By Mitch Prentice / mprentice@lakesunonline.com

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Camdenton Afterschool Services Director Sherry Comer says Stephens reached out to the robotics team on Facebook and made the request. The team went to work and was able to put together 60 masks, 30 of which were sent to Afghanistan with the other 30 being sent to Fort Leonard Wood. Following the success of this shipment, Stephens reached out for another 300.

Even as the COVID-19 presence starts to be felt less in Missouri, MAJ Justin R. Stephens BSN, RN, BLS, ACLS, PALS, TNCC, who is currently deployed in Afghanistan, is seeing the pandemic unfold in a much different light. Looking for a local source of help, Stephens reached out to the Camdenton LASER Robotics team and asked for a donation of face shields to be sent to his station for the medics in his unit. The request was received and honored in Camdenton fashion.

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Comer says the team accepted the request and would later receive donations of funds from Camdenton VFW 5923 and Auxiliary, as well as a donation of mask materials from Potters House Church.

Stephens and his family first visited the lake six years ago. He says they fell in love with the area and ended up purchasing some land in Montreal where they would create the Dirty Bird Ostrich Ranch and Rescue. He would later be assigned as the Clinical Nurse Officer in Charge of the Emergency Department at Fort Leonard Wood. This connection to the lake area was what drew him to reach out to LASER.

“When I saw the High School Robotics team had started making 3D printed face shields for the local hospital and private practices on Facebook, I thought that it was a great idea!” Stephens said.

He says that even within the military, the virus presents a lot of unknowns. He says his team in Afghanistan is working alongside medical professions from around the world to help aid in the prevention and treatment of COVID-19. Stephens says that General Miller, the commander of both U.S. and Coalition forces, has made the protection of service members, civilians, and contractors deployed here his top priority.

“We are gathering a lot of information to make sure that we are safe, our Soldiers are safe, our coalition partners are safe, and the local population is safe,” Stephens said.

Stephens’ crew works with limited resources from their worldwide stock. The donations received from the LASER Robotics team helped boost morale and was the highlight of his team’s week when they opened the masks from the mail. It goes to show how much local efforts can go on to make a big difference around the world.

“I just want to say, “Thank you!” to the Potter House Church, the Camdenton VFW Post and Women’s Auxiliary, and the Camdenton High First Laser 3284 Robotics Team for your tremendous support,” Stephens said. “You have no idea how much it means to all of us!”