

# Pay It Forward PPE

#CraftingForCommunity

**The Pay It Forward PPE Project provides personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline workers and supports community health and resilience.**

*In order to protect our frontline workers and address enormous health disparities locally, a partnership between Duluth-based nonprofit Ecolibrium3 and manufacturer Frost River, Pay It Forward PPE, engaged thousands of community volunteers to assemble face shields and is reinvesting proceeds from PPE sales to protect neighborhood residents and support local organizations.*



## The Pay It Forward PPE Project has:

- Produced over 220,000 face shields for front-line workers
- Distributed over 5,000 masks to community members vulnerable to the coronavirus
- Is making \$50,000 donations to a variety of organizations in proceeds from PPE sales
- Recruited 50 groups and connected with over 1000 new community volunteers

Ecolibrium3, a nonprofit embedded in the Lincoln Park neighborhood of Duluth, MN, has long worked to address inequity in their low-income neighborhood. The Pay It Forward PPE Project is the most recent enterprise taken by the organization that addresses neighborhood health through a unique social enterprise model that reinvests in community resilience.

A neighborhood with a unique history and population, but facing many inequities surrounding poverty, education, and health outcomes, Lincoln Park is especially vulnerable to the threat of the coronavirus. Residents face shorter life expectancy, disproportionate environmental hazards, and other challenges that make the neighborhood especially susceptible to the most severe consequences of the disease.

At the outbreak of the pandemic, Ecolibrium3 worked to organize food resources for children and coordinate a neighborhood wide network of organizations, but the need for personal protective equipment for both the

local healthcare system and neighborhood residents became increasingly apparent. Ecolibrium3 developed an innovative project to address these neighborhood needs through a social enterprise model called Pay It Forward PPE.

Pay It Forward PPE is a collaboration with the Lincoln Park manufacturer Frost River and groups of volunteers to assemble face shields. Frost River was engaged in PPE manufacturing at the outset of the pandemic, but the partnership allowed them to focus on more specific and technical devices while volunteers worked with the easy to assemble face shields.

Ecolibrium3 is using the proceeds from the sale of face shields and masks to reinvest in the Lincoln Park neighborhood. The proceeds provide reusable masks to community members, make donations to local nonprofits chosen by volunteers, and invest in community resilience programs.



## PURCHASE PPE:

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or call (218) 336-1038



“We’re focused on coordinating Lincoln Park’s assets so that they work to benefit everyone,” Jodi Slick, Ecolibrium3 CEO said. “Creating a program that provides a local solution to a community need and reinvests in the neighborhood is what Ecolibrium3 is all about.”

Nearly 50 groups, from local businesses, community groups, churches, and even groups of friends stepped up to volunteer with the Project. Over 500 new volunteers were able to serve and reconnect with the coworkers, friends, and family who have been physically distant in a safe and controlled environment.

Each group selected a charitable cause or organization for which their proceeds would be invested. Contributions are being made to organizations as diverse as the local branch of the NAACP, local food shelves, and high school sports scholarship programs.



Finally, as the Project has shipped face shields across the country, Ecolibrium3 is prioritizing the distribution of masks locally in Duluth. Masks were passed out at local rallies supporting racial justice and police reform and have been distributed to other nonprofits as they seek to reopen.

The Pay It Forward PPE Project is just one example of Ecolibrium3’s multidirectional approach to neighborhood resilience. The nonprofit continues to work to lead and inspire change towards an equitable and sustainable future in Lincoln Park and beyond!

#### About Ecolibrium3:

Ecolibrium3 is a 501c3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to lead and inspire change toward an equitable and sustainable future. Serving as the convening organization in Duluth’s low-income Lincoln Park neighborhood, Ecolibrium3 works on all aspects of sustainable revitalization that advance opportunities for residents and businesses, including community sustainability and resiliency.

#### About Frost River:

Frost River is a Duluth-based manufacturer of quality outdoor goods. From waxed canvas and leather bags, riveted and sewn for legendary durability, to the rapid retooling of their processes to meet the PPE needs of frontline workers, Frost River is a leader in quality and compassion. Frost River is one of the cornerstone companies revitalizing the Lincoln Park Craft District-  
#CraftingSomethingGreat.

#### Volunteer Spotlight:



Michelle Kilroy

#### With whom did you volunteer?

Project Joy, Denfeld Hoops, and the Western Little League

#### Why did you volunteer?

“I’m always looking for ways to fund-raise, but because of the pandemic most volunteer opportunities were canceled. This opportunity came up so we jumped on the opportunity to raise money for our groups and help the community; it was a win-win!”

#### Where did you use your LNP Gift Card?

“We used ours at the Duluth Grill. Lincoln Park has so much to offer so the gift card was a huge bonus!”

#### PLASTIC FACE SHIELDS MADE IN USA.



Face shields are used to create a barrier from liquid spray and reduce the contamination of face masks.

**Discounts available** for regional and statewide, organizations serving marginalized populations, and bulk orders.



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