

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Central Valley Community Foundation Providing Over 30,000 Masks to Healthcare Workers, Addressing Critical Shortage in Personal Protective Equipment**

*Purchase of 30,000 surgical masks and 500 face shields, and coordination of 2,000 homemade masks is possible with support of local donors and volunteers*

(FRESNO, CA) - Today, Kiki's Quilt Shack is holding a class for volunteers interested in making masks for local healthcare workers on the frontlines of the coronavirus crisis. The class will take place from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, and 20 volunteers will receive training, materials, and a workstation space complete with sewing machine and plenty of room for social distancing.

Ketty and Mannie Massengale opened Kiki's Quilt Shack at 5475 North Palm Ave in Fresno in 2016 and quickly became more than just a quilting store, transforming it into a forward-thinking action center for a community of quilters throughout Greater Fresno. After learning about challenges facing local frontline healthcare workers from Hannah McAbee, Director of Local Philanthropy at Central Valley Community Foundation (CVCF), Ketty and Mannie immediately started researching materials and mask styles that would best protect workers.

After extensive research, they developed a custom pattern to create kits that volunteers can use to make masks. Each kit contains two yards of top-quality fabric, enough to create 12 masks. Kiki's Quilt Shack is donating fabric for 2,000 masks and is working with HandsOn Central California to recruit volunteers to make the masks.

Today's class is just one opportunity for volunteers to get involved. HandsOn Central California will be delivering kits to volunteers 55 years and older who cannot leave their homes; and others can pick up kits at Kiki's Quilt Shack to take home to sew and return later.

Opportunities to participate in Kiki's Quilt Shack mask-making operation include:

Thursday, April 2nd	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Curbside pickup of kits
Tuesday, April 7th	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Curbside pickup of kits, drop-off of completed masks
Tuesday, April 9th	10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Virtual Mask-making Class – register by email at <a href="mailto:fresnomasks@gmail.com">fresnomasks@gmail.com</a>
	11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Curbside drop-off of completed masks

**-MORE-**

This initiative is part of a larger effort to help frontline workers and nonprofits impacted by the coronavirus crisis. CVCF has directly purchased 30,000 masks that will be donated and delivered to local health clinics early next week. CVCF is also funding the production of up to 500 face shields for emergency room workers through a local engineering firm, the Pi Shop.

“This community is responding with incredible generosity and sacrifice to help one another,” said Ashley Swearengin, President and CEO of the Central Valley Community Foundation. “Everyone can do something to help, whether it’s volunteering to sewing a mask, making a small donation so more supplies can be purchased, or simply checking in on friends and neighbors to make sure they are ok. We are all in this together and each of us has a role to play.”

On Tuesday, CVCF announced that it will grant \$500,000 to Central Valley nonprofits responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 17, CVCF has raised or received commitments of more than \$300,000 from individual, corporate, and philanthropic donors for general emergency relief. In addition, CVCF has committed \$200,000 of its own resources to supporting veterans who are impacted by the coronavirus crisis.

With the initial funds raised, grants are being made to 12 nonprofit agencies, including the Central California Food Bank, Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission, Catholic Charities Dioceses of Fresno, Poverello House, Marjaree Mason Center, Fresno Barrios Unidos, Fresno Metro Ministries, Every Neighborhood Partnership, HandsOn Central California, Central Valley Children’s Services, and United Way of Fresno & Madera Counties.

The COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund is made possible by individual gifts from local donors and with the support of The California Endowment, the James B. McClatchy Foundation, PG&E Corporation Foundation, the Sierra Health Foundation, CalWellness, and Comcast. Individuals can contribute online at [www.centralvalleycf.org/donate](http://www.centralvalleycf.org/donate).

CVCF will continue to accept donations to address growing and constantly changing challenges related to COVID-19. Donations can be made by visiting [www.centralvalleycf.org/donate](http://www.centralvalleycf.org/donate). 100% of individual contributions will be mobilized to support our community’s most vulnerable people.

Founded in 1966, the Central Valley Community Foundation (CVCF) is a trusted community partner in California’s Central Valley. Our mission is to cultivate smart philanthropy, lead, and invest in solutions that build stronger communities. Our service area includes 2 million people living in six counties: Merced, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, and Kings. CVCF attracts investment and deploys resources to solve persistent economic, environmental, and social challenges in four key areas: education, economic development, environmental stewardship, and neighborhood renewal.

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