

# Hospital gets its helping hand

COVID-19 Defense Fund donates \$25,000 to SBELIH with assistance from 280 donors to date

BY BOB LIEPA  
SPORTS EDITOR

## MAKING A *difference*

The Operation COVID-19 Defense Fund can be called a success.

Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital would heartily agree. The Greenport hospital received donated proceeds from the fund July 1. SBELIH said the donated funds will be used to acquire additional resources to support institution-wide infection prevention efforts, including COVID-19 testing equipment and ultraviolet cleaning equipment.

A GoFundMe campaign began earlier this year when a collaboration of several local businessmen spearheaded a project to produce face shields for hospitals, first responders and community outreach volunteers. “We were hoping to just raise enough money to cover the cost of materials,” Jamie Mills, president of William J. Mills & Co. in Greenport, recalled in a phone interview Tuesday.

Well, things went beyond that. An original goal of \$10,000 was surpassed in a single day. A Phase II goal of \$25,000 was set. That was surpassed as well.

“We raised \$28,000 in three days,” Richard Vandenburg, co-founder of Greenport Harbor Brewing Company

along with John Leigey, said in April, according to an SBELIH press release. “We’ve raised what we anticipated we would need to fund approx-

imately 5,000 units; any excess funds will be turned over to the hospital to purchase equipment, beds, or whatever is needed.”

The defense fund organizers created a total of 8,050 face shields for local essential workers and over \$47,000 from 280-plus donors has been raised to date, according to the hospital.

Mr. Mills said the defense fund donated \$25,000 to the hospital.

“We were extremely gratified at the level of participation of donors and appreciation for some local companies trying to fight this insidious disease,” Mr. Mills said. “My heart is glowing.”

Among those involved in the defense fund’s work are Bob and William Mills of William J. Mills & Co., the sailmaking firm that developed and produced the face shields; Mark Miller, former owner of Miller Environmental; and Bob Gammon, co-owner of Woodside Orchards in Jamesport and co-lead advisor for the Southold/Greenport robotics team.

Jamie Mills said a small army of volunteers “were the ones that really made it happen. Without them, we



STONY BROOK ELIH COURTESY PHOTO

A total of 8,050 face shields were created through Operation COVID-19 Defense Fund, and a fundraiser generated more than \$47,000 for Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital to further support infection prevention efforts.

would never have been able to accomplish what we did.”

A full-page ad in The Suffolk Times in April listed the names of 79 volunteers.

“The original plan was we were going to make 3,000 masks, and the demand just kept growing and by the time we hit 3,000, we were on a roll,” Jamie Mills said. He added, “By the time we put together the last thousand masks, excluding the cutting time of the glass and the Velcro, we were building one mask every eight seconds.”

“We are so grateful for our community’s extraordinary efforts to help us sustain our hospital’s mission to serve the North Fork and Shelter Island,” Paul Romanelli, chairman of the ELIH Foundation Board, said in a statement. “To the Brewery, the Mills family, Mr. Miller, Mr. Gammon, and the donors who have generously supported this initiative: thank you for standing with us.”

[bliepa@timesreview.com](mailto:bliepa@timesreview.com)

## Thank you...

Peconic Landing would like to express our sincere gratitude for the outpouring of support and generous donations we have received from our members, their families, our team, our team’s families and the greater community. As we navigate the ever changing landscape of this pandemic, your continued support has truly helped lift the spirits of our community.

Thank you to  
 University, Stony Brook Eastern Long  
 Island Hospital, Peconic Bay Medical Center, San  
 Simeon, Aldo’s Coffee Company, Ammirati’s Love  
 Lane, Andy’s Restaurant, At Home Services for  
 Independent Living, Bach Grazina East End Orthodontics,  
 Beds & Borders, Bianchi Davis Greenhouses, Brightview Landscape,  
 CJ Van Bourgondien Greenhouses, Coalition of Students Against  
 Coronavirus, Control Solutions Inc, Duggal Visual Solutions, East  
 End Group, Essex Financial, Flavour Fields, The Halyard, Heron  
 Suites, Alex and Chris Grover from I2M, The Giving Room,  
 Goldberg’s Bagels, Greenport High School, Jay W Guild  
 Greenhouse, Jernick Moving and Storage, Kate’s Cheese Company,  
 La Capricciosa, Riverhead Lowe’s, Matchbox Distilling  
 Company, Mattituck Lions Club, Oyster Ponds Faculty  
 Association, Oysterponds School District, North Fork  
 Quilters Guild, Rotary Club of Southold, Rotary Club  
 of Riverhead, Sodexo USA, Schumacher  
 Fabrics, Southold Pharmacy, Sterlington  
 Deli, TC Diamond Arts, Wendy’s  
 Deli and everyone who  
 has continuously  
 supported us  
 during this  
 time.

