

# INNOVATION WITHOUT HESITATION HELPS PRENT IMPACT LOCAL HEALTH SYSTEMS

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“The caregivers at SSM Health St. Mary’s Hospital-Janesville have truly been humbled by the outpouring of support received from the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prent Corporation’s donation of face shields was not only generous, but also a real game-changer during a time when Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been in such short supply around the globe,” said **SSM Health St. Mary’s Hospital-Janesville President Eric Thornton**. “We cannot say thank you enough for being so innovative and dedicated to providing assistance when health care workers needed it the most.”

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“We are very grateful to Prent for their generous donation, and commend them on their innovative solution and quick turnaround. The safety of our patients and staff is our number one priority, and this donation is very much appreciated,” said **Javon R. Bea, Mercyhealth President/CEO**. “We are seeing the best of people during this national crisis and extend our deepest thanks.”



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THE  COVID-19 ISSUE

# NEWSPRENT

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## Prent and GOEX Fulfill Dire Need for PPE

On March 23, Mercyhealth in Janesville, Wis. contacted Prent to fulfill a shortage of essential face shields to protect its frontline staff. The initial plan, to provide 2,000 shields in four days quickly grew to 10,000 face shields for all area health care workers and first responders. Prent’s development team, with the assistance of local doctors, immediately got to work creating an innovative, cost-effective design for a face shield that could be quickly manufactured, according to Rachel Andres, VP of Manufacturing. “Prent went from learning of the shortage to delivering much needed product to Mercyhealth in 48 hours.” *(continued on back page)*

## EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS

### 30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Troy McCann Janesville

### 15 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Tanya Gomez-Alverson Janesville

Brian Bowman Janesville

Kuan Kean Hooi Shanghai

David Lin Shanghai

Maziah Binti Mohammad Malaysia

S.Norasikin Binti Supok Malaysia

Sim Chee Woei Malaysia

Zaifol Bin Yahya Malaysia

### 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Mohamad Bin Bakar Malaysia

Mark Rothlisberger Janesville

Sun Shen Shanghai

### 5 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Jarrett Burke Janesville

Tylar Frame Janesville

Jake Giddley Janesville

Justin Grube Janesville

Xiongyu Han Shanghai

Jinling Li Shanghai

Xian Lu Shanghai

Amirul Anwar Bin Maliki Malaysia

Daniel Muehlenkamp Janesville

Susan Olsen Janesville

Sigfredo Rios Puerto Rico

Jackie Rudolph Janesville

Xueyan Shi Shanghai

Kendal Spoon Janesville

Syahrul Anuar Bin Suppian Malaysia

Sasha Werhane Janesville

Huahua Yu Shanghai

Randy Zenke Janesville

Furong Zhang Shanghai

Kerk Wan Zuo Malaysia

### A FOND FAREWELL TO THESE PRENT RETIREES

#### Naomi Ehle » Inspector/Packer

**2/1/2011–3/10/2020** Naomi will spend her retirement gardening, walking her dog, and photographing nature.

#### Barb Moore » Inspector/Packer

**6/28/2005–3/19/2020** Barb plans to go fishing with her husband, and enjoy time with her family in retirement.

## A Message From Joseph Pregont, President & CEO



From Puerto Rico's January earthquakes to the current global pandemic, Prent was put to the test in 2020 and successfully overcame some extraordinary challenges. Prent Shanghai was our first facility to be affected by COVID-19. When Prent employees returned after Chinese New Year in January, they learned government protocol for all manufacturing facilities forced our plant to close. Thanks to our strict preventive measures and the speed in which we implemented new protocols, Prent Shanghai was one of the first manufacturing facilities allowed to reopen. As the pandemic spread, Prent adjusted its operations in Malaysia, Europe and the Americas based on best practices in Shanghai. Prent's teams excelled, adapting quickly to new procedures to maintain an uninterrupted supply of product to all customers.

I was pleased to see our Janesville team called to action to determine how Prent could assist with the PPE shortage by designing and building a face shield. Our design and manufacturing teams had a product ready for shipping within 48 hours from the initial concept! We started shipping face shields in March and, by April, we shipped over two million to first responders and health care workers in need all over the world.

We'll continuously monitor and adjust our business practices according to the current situation. Although we did not qualify for any government stimulus packages, we are fortunate to have a solid financial status that will get us through these unprecedented times. We understand most of our customers are planning to return to previous levels of business soon, but we anticipate a downturn in the medical device business over the next several months with the elimination of elective surgeries. I wish you all well and hope our Prent teams, suppliers and customers remain healthy and safe.

*(continued from front cover)*

## Prent and GOEX Fulfill Dire Need for PPE

Using 3D modeling to design the part, and an in-house laser to cut the shield shape, Prent had multiple working concepts in under four hours. GOEX donated custom-extruded, anti-scratch, masked medical grade RPETG in 24 hours, and Millennium Die Group donated an inline, production die in five hours. Mercyhealth received the first shields two days ahead of schedule.

Prent was able to dedicate an entire production line to face shields without impacting other orders, according to Joseph Pregont II, VP of Corporate Sales. Prent has continued to ramp up its production capacity and is now able to manufacture over 300,000 shields per day at its Janesville, Puerto Rico and Rosarito, Mexico facilities. "Prent will continue its face shield production until hospital supply chains can meet the demand," Pregont said.

"This effort would not have been possible without our amazing employees and suppliers who stepped up and worked together," Andres said. "Prent is honored to give back to our communities by supporting health care workers who willingly put themselves on the front line of the coronavirus every day."



# SHARED BEST PRACTICES HELPED PRENT ADAPT EARLY TO THE PANDEMIC



Prent China shared its best practices designed to keep employees safe and facilities operational with other Prent facilities across the globe to help them better prepare for the pandemic

Prent China facilities resumed production at full capacity in March 2020—not long after the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) impacted the area in January. The Chinese government implemented nationwide plant closures as an immediate containment action to prevent spread of the virus. With an in-depth business recovery plan in place that included various prevention controls, Prent China was among the very few initial companies in the region to receive governmental verification and approval to resume production on February 12. By the end of March, employees returned to work safely without any positive cases.

Below is an overview from the Prent China team chronicling how it was at the forefront of creating best practices for safety and operations during the pandemic:

## **SWIFT LEADERSHIP RESPONSE**

Prent China organized an ad hoc committee immediately after its government announced the lockdown of Wuhan—the center of the outbreak—on January 23. The objective was to ensure Prent employees would be well protected as Prent embarked on resuming operations of its two local facilities

in a safe and organized manner. Prent China General Manager Kuan Kean Hooi led task force groups, that were set up according to government guidelines, to work on detailed preparations to ensure all employees were protected and able to work safely in Prent's facilities. The four task force groups were comprised of People Management (by HR), Supplier and Customer Visit Management (by Sales and Warehouse), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Preparation (by Production) and Facility Support (by Engineering and HR).

## **EMPLOYEE ON-LINE TRAINING**

Employee protection and safety were Prent China's top priorities. Since the Chinese New Year started on January 24, 83% of Prent employees traveled back to their hometowns in 25 provinces throughout China. Among them, 16 employees went back to their hometown in Hubei province—the epicenter of the outbreak. Prent China continually updated all employees with daily news of the virus, and provided educational training on COVID-19 self-awareness and protection guidelines. Employees were required to pass an on-line test to confirm their understanding of guidelines that

covered general knowledge of the disease, standard personal hygiene practices, and detailed instructions for behaviors on the way to work, inside the workplace, surrounding activity in public, and more.

## **EMPLOYEE HEALTH MONITORING**

Prent employees who traveled back to Shanghai from other cities were quarantined for 14 days before resuming work. To avoid potential infection in the company, employees were required to submit their daily health status (including any virus symptoms and a body temperature) through Prent's WeChat app by 8:30 am. Security guards at Prent facilities also measured the employees' temperatures before entering the premises. In China, all individuals are given a Health QR Code (either green or red) by the government to verify their health status. Only those with a green health code are allowed to enter company premises.

## **THOROUGH SANITATION**

Employees can easily access hand sanitizers at Prent and all employees are required to disinfect their office supplies. Prent also conducts regular, comprehensive disinfection all throughout the premises.

*(continued inside)*

# ADAPTING TO A PANDEMIC

## Shared Best Practices

(continued from back)

### LOGISTICS AND PPE PREPARATION

The availability of various PPE was crucial to resuming production, so Prent China made every effort to acquire thermometers, masks, and hand sanitizer.

And, as part of social distancing practices, Prent employees were divided into smaller groups for meal times, and table dividers are placed between employees when eating. In general, Prent China feels the situation is under control.

### SHARED BEST PRACTICES

Prent China clearly influenced all other Prent facilities, according to Rachel Andres, VP of Manufacturing. “Prent was fortunate to prepare in advance, thanks to the preventive measures that Shanghai shared with our other facilities. They sent a detailed presentation that included communication to employees, personal hygiene measures, PPE we needed to purchase, visitor management, and more. From the day we received it, we started working on adapting it to our other facilities around the globe. Because we started preparing early, we were able to obtain necessary PPE, such as N95 masks, medical masks, gloves, touchless hand sanitizer stations, digital thermometers for employees, and infrared, touchless thermometers, which were vital for carrying out our security measures.”

“In Janesville, we purchased items before the pandemic really hit our location, even when some thought we were being overly cautious! We are so glad we purchased these items when we did,” Andres said. “And, now we are making our own face shields for employees and have donated tens of thousands to community first responders and medical workers.”

A few of the operational changes that Prent Janesville adopted since the outbreak include staggered schedules to limit employee contact during shift changes and break times, work-from-home opportunities for non-essential to operations personnel, quarantine policies for those who test positive or have direct contact with someone who has tested positive, employee health monitoring, and factory disinfection.



Employees sanitize hands at entrance and while inside.



Office areas are cleaned and sanitized regularly.



Regular disinfection occurs inside the facilities.



Masked employees social distance in cubicals.



Employees on all shifts wear required PPE for protection.



Employees practice social distancing on breaks.

## LET'S GET TECHNICAL Deciphering Sidewall Drafts



Parts can stack closer with more sidewall draft, reducing shipping costs (left); Less draft in parts with similar thickness increases distance resulting in higher shipping costs (right)



Release from a mold is easier with increased draft (left); without sidewall draft parts can get scratched or dented during ejection (right)

Sidewall draft is a fundamental standard in thermoforming. Defined as the clearance designed to facilitate the removal of a part from a mold, it helps parts nest so thermoformers can package less air and save the customer added shipping costs.

“Sidewall draft enables Prent to distribute material more evenly, which is especially critical to our medical device packaging,” says Chris Bladl, VP of Product Development.

***DID YOU KNOW? Increasing draft reduces stack height and can, in some cases, cut a customer's shipping costs in half.***

Additionally, without sidewall draft and radii, the material wall thickness will thin out and not distribute as evenly, according to Bladl. And, with minimal or no draft, friction can occur between a part and a mold during ejection and scratch or dent the part.

A common sidewall draft is between 7 to 10 degrees with a recommended minimum of 5 degrees. Prent has long been a proponent of using more draft than less because of the advantages to the customer that include improved material distribution and the savings in shipping. For more information, or to schedule a Product Development 101 event, please email [sales@prent.com](mailto:sales@prent.com).

# PRENT

## Profiles



### GET TO KNOW YOUR PCO

**Shireene Myers, Prent Flagstaff  
Production Control Manager**

Shireene Myers was hired in June 2008 at Prent Flagstaff as a part-time Inspector/Packer. She then became an IP trainer, and after nine months, moved into production control, where she has worked ever since. Her responsibilities include customer service, processing and scheduling customer orders, and ordering and inventory management of raw materials and finished goods. Myers is also an internal ISO auditor. Working in a satellite facility requires knowledge and back-up responsibilities in other departments, according to Myers. So, she works in Shipping when needed, and is forklift certified to help load and unload trucks. A favorite thing

about her job is that it is challenging, and each day can be different from the one before. “I am continuously learning. I also enjoy the relationships I’ve cultivated with my customers, my suppliers, and my co-workers. I have had the opportunity to travel and meet many Prent customers, which I believe strengthens our working relationships. It is helpful to meet the individuals that I usually only interact with via e-mail or by phone,” she said.

Myers says she is proud to be working for a company that is so generous and community-minded. “There are numerous examples of this, from the hurricane and earthquake relief efforts for our Prent colleagues in Puerto Rico to the current COVID-19 actions. I have seen the impact of the face shield project here in Flagstaff ... There is overwhelming gratitude from the community.”

Myers enjoys spending time with family and friends having dinners, doing jigsaw puzzles, and playing fierce games of badminton! She loves to garden, hike, and go for long walks. Her husband Phil and she spend time cooking together, watching movies, and traveling. She says they are currently remodeling their house, doing whatever we can ourselves, consulting friends for expertise, and hiring professionals for the rest. “Our kids and friends have helped a lot with the demo projects. It is very gratifying to see a complete project and know that we worked together to get it done,” she said. Born and raised just outside of Salt Lake City, Utah, Myers is also working on earning a degree in business.



### Prent Puerto Rico Donates Face Shields to Local Hospital

Immediately upon learning of the need for PPE, Prent Puerto Rico donated thousands of face shields to Pavia Hospital on April 14. Executive Director Dinorah Hernandez (pictured with Wilfredo Mercado, VP of Manufacturing–Latin America, at left, and her medical staff) were grateful for the donation, says Mercado. “We also donated thousands of shields to the Puerto Rico Health Center in San Juan, and have orders in process to donate to our community’s first responders,” he said.



### Prent Flagstaff Adapts Production Line to Help First Responders

Prent Arizona learned from its local chamber that there was a need for PPE in the community and sprang into action, quickly converting a production line to face shields. In early April, Prent donated 2,000 face shields to Flagstaff Medical Center and supplied other facilities in need, including the Coconino Detention Facility, local fire departments, Guardian Air Transport, Northern Arizona Orthopedics, True North Dentistry, Flagstaff Homeless Shelter, and Flagstaff Comfort Keepers.

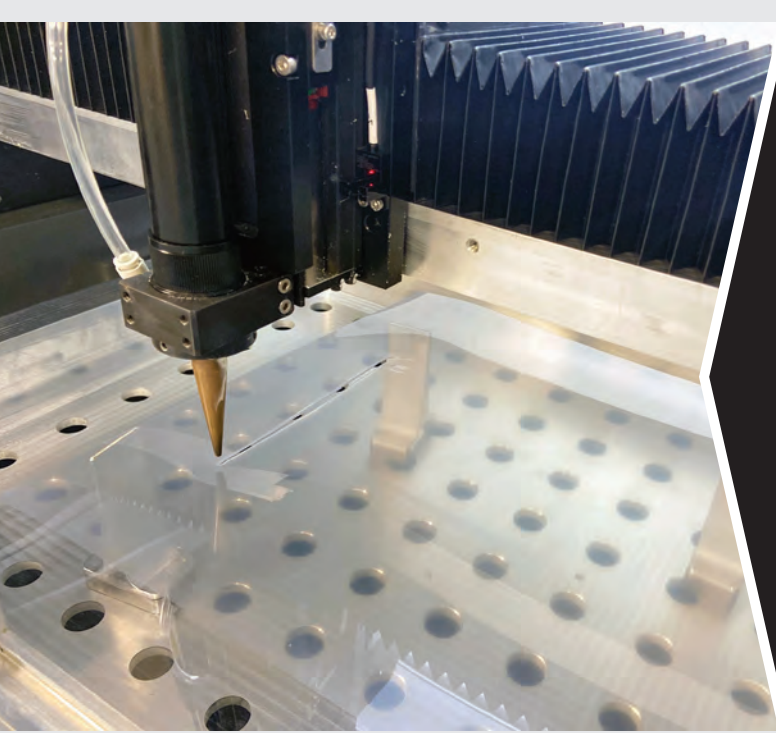


### Global Support Ensures P34 Extension Updates

Earlier this year, Prent Corporation engineers from all over the globe collaborated to help Prent Denmark update its P34s to the most current standards. *Pictured from left to right: Curt Nyhus (Engineering Manager, Prent Janesville), Peter Bay (Managing Director, Prent Denmark), Frederik Sjøberg (Production Manager, Prent Denmark), Kamal Bin Abdullah (Senior Maintenance Engineer, Prent Malaysia), Al Muhazam Shah Bin Hussein (Process Engineer Pilot, Prent Malaysia), and Mark Chen (Senior Maintenance Engineer, Prent Shanghai).*

### Prent Costa Rica Donates Personal Protective Equipment to National Emergency Commission

When Prent Janesville designed an innovative solution for face shields made of only plastic and foam, Prent Costa Rica received 1,000 units and immediately assembled and donated them to the National Emergency Commission (CNE). Several hundred were also donated to local workers on the front lines with a greater risk of exposure to the coronavirus, including garbage collectors and staff from municipalities of the cantons where many Prent employees reside. “This would not have been possible without the mystique of our collaborators, who donated part of their time in the creation and packaging of these face shields,” says Prent Costa Rica Plant Manager Juan Carlos Touma.



## Laser Trimming Improves Prent Prototypes

Earlier this year, Prent began using laser trimming technology to improve the accuracy and aesthetic of its prototypes, offering customers a more representative portrayal of products nearing the end of the design phase.

Laser cutting better depicts the accuracy of high-volume production trimming, according to Chris Bladl, VP of Product Development. "A laser cut edge is much closer to production quality than our traditional trimming methods," Bladl says. This new technology improves overall prototyping efficiency by decreasing the labor and time needed for trimming. "It also allows us to show the intricacies involved in 3D cut profiles."

Prent customers may benefit from laser trimming in other applications in the future, Bladl says. "The ability to use lasers for trimming and part etching in a high volume production environment may be closer than we used to think!"

## Prent Malaysia Prepared for COVID-19 with Help from Prent China

Prent Malaysia benefited from the preparedness of its counterpart in Shanghai, who shared its safety measures and guidelines that included, but are not limited to:

**Working from Home:** Arrangements were made for those able to do so, and effective communication guidelines were prepared for each department.

**Temperature Screening for Visitors and Employees:** Each employee received a thermometer for taking a daily temperature and recording into a mobile app. Processes were established to prevent any symptomatic employee to report to work, and instead seek medical attention.

**Sanitization:** Hand sanitizer has been provided at the entrance and in common areas, and sanitization in the factory is done three times a day. Major sanitization

also occurs once a week internally and externally.

**Safe Distancing:** Restrictions were placed on the number of employees allowed in any confined area, and the canteen and pantry have individual, partitioned seating.

**Isolation Area:** A meeting room at the reception lobby serves as a Holding Area for any suspected cases detected in the facility. A process was also established for a response in the event that a case is detected.

Prent Malaysia continues to update its guidelines to adhere to government requirements and will stay vigilant to ensure everyone's safety during the pandemic.

Additionally, 10,000 medical-grade, surgical masks were donated to Hospital Sultanah Aminah in support of the frontline medical officers.

## Prent Janesville Hires Furloughed Workers

When COVID-19 forced Wisconsin to close its schools and businesses in March, Prent Janesville seized the opportunity to hire local furloughed employees and displaced students to fill temporary, part-time positions for the production of much needed PPE. Prent hired over 150 people in the area, including many family members of current employees, who were without work. The newer face shield production line has provided the temporary employees with jobs as inspector/packers and material handlers. And, these employees have also filled open positions of the Prent employees who requested time off during the pandemic.

"Temporary employees who have learned to keep up with the faster pace have been able to move into a clean room unit for our typical medical business," says Rachel Andres, VP of Manufacturing. "Prent will make sure to retain employees as long as there is a need."

