

## IU13 Student Creates Masks for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community

**Invention from necessity:** Elizabeth Martin, a student at Janice Beitzel's Deaf & Hard of Hearing class at Warwick School District, has made masks that allow for lip reading. The masks, of her own design, are handmade of cotton and elastic, with a clear vinyl piece in the middle. Elizabeth has made 130 of them so far, selling all but a few and taking orders for more.



Elizabeth used creativity and ingenuity to her advantage. She realized that she and others who are hearing impaired were having trouble understanding those around them. When she began designing the mask, she found odds and ends, like elastic and rubber bands to use. Elizabeth enjoys creating, and with the help of her grandmother's sewing machine, she began the process of designing a mask that could help those in the deaf and hard of hearing community.

She changed her invention several times, noting that she was looking for new ways to make already established designs. "Basically, I looked [at how] other people were making them and took those ideas and made it into my own design. The hardest part was getting the supplies to make them because I am not allowed to go shopping because of the virus. So, I made the list of what I thought I would need and my mom would go to the local store and get them. We also bought some supplies online," she wrote. She would go on to find her own rhythm, sewing masks both by hand and by machine.

Overall, Elizabeth is so grateful for the donations and orders she has received, along with those who have spread the word about her creations.

Elizabeth's parents are equally proud of her. "She has accomplished a lot throughout the last several weeks. She has taken responsibility for the needs of others into her own hands by making these masks," they said.

IU13 is proud of you, too, Elizabeth! Keep up the good work! If you are interested in learning more, you may contact Elizabeth directly at [LizMartinMasks@outlook.com](mailto:LizMartinMasks@outlook.com).