

## **FUZEHUB AWARDS FINGER LAKES TEXTILES \$15K GRANT FOR FACE-MASK PRODUCTION**

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WATERLOO, N.Y. — Finger Lakes Textiles (FLT), a Waterloo-based textile and knitting factory and a division of Mozaic, is using a \$15,000 grant from FuzeHub to expand and “accelerate” its manufacturing of face masks for protection during the COVID-19 pandemic.

FuzeHub, an Albany-based nonprofit, is the statewide center for the New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NY MEP).

The \$15,000 FuzeHub grant helped fund the purchase of new equipment that will triple FLT’s weekly production of washable 0.5-micron filter face masks. The five industrial sewing machines that FLT has added to its facility will also help diversify its product mix once the surging demand for face masks begins to subside.

“Finger Lakes Textiles quickly pivoted to produce face masks to help keep people safe amid the coronavirus pandemic. It was an inspiring undertaking, and FuzeHub is excited to help them increase production,” Elena Garuc, executive director of FuzeHub, said in a statement.

The grant from FuzeHub helped FLT secure the equipment it needed to “significantly ramp up production” which helped create jobs, Edward Sayles, Mozaic’s director of development, said. “We hope our team’s response to the pandemic will further demonstrate that every person, regardless of any perceived disability, can make an impact and contribute to our community in so many different ways.”

Mozaic, FLT’s parent organization, was formed in January 2020 through the merger of the Arc of Seneca Cayuga and Arc of Yates. The combined organization serves about 2,000 people and their families throughout the Finger Lakes region.

FLT currently employs about 87 workers. It recently added five new employees to assist with face-mask manufacturing. Deemed an essential business because of its work for the



A worker at Finger Lakes Textiles (FLT) in Waterloo sews a mask for use in COVID-19 protection. FLT, a division of Mozaic, has secured a \$15,000 FuzeHub grant for its mask-production efforts. (Photo credit: Finger Lakes Textiles)

Department of Defense, FLT says it has implemented enhanced health and safety procedures to keep employees safe.

Its first large order for masks came through the Cornell Prison Education Program, which organized peer institutions involved in the New York Consortium for Higher Education in Prison to provide masks for the state's incarcerated population. FLT is producing 43,000 masks.