

Tulane medical students coordinate donations of protective gear for hospitals

Faith Dawson

fdawson@tulane.edu



From left: Nicholas Stephen Loupe of the Cajun Army volunteer disaster recovery group, Tulane medical student Sophie Foroushani, Dr. John Dwyer of Tulane's Infectious Diseases Section, and medical students Taylor Hopper and Andre Perez-Chaumont receive the Cajun Army's donation of personal protective equipment for healthcare workers in New Orleans. (Photo provided by Student Clinic Council)

In an effort to collect needed supplies for healthcare workers, students from Tulane School of Medicine's student community clinics rallied together and overnight built a regional donation hub to collect personal protective equipment (PPE).

The School of Medicine is now accepting contributions of several types of PPE and supplies to be distributed at Tulane hospitals and clinics and other facilities. The school has already received several significant donations from outside the university.

The effort started when students who participate in Tulane's 22 student-run clinics worked with School of Medicine faculty to donate their extra PPE to hospitals.

"We've been kind of spearheading this, but definitely it's a multidisciplinary effort," said Alex Woodbridge, a third-year medical student and president of the Student Clinic Council. "We're working with Tulane administration, and admins at the different hospitals and then also providers within the community" to get the supplies to healthcare facilities. Dean Lee Hamm, MD; Elma Ledoux, MD, associate dean for admissions and student affairs; John Dwyer, DO, assistant professor of medicine; and Sue Pollack, assistant dean for administration, worked with scores of Tulane medical students to staff the telephone lines and handle incoming inventory.

In two days of accepting donations, the group received thousands of items of protective cover wear. The Cajun Army sent a large shipment from Baton Rouge, including 950 protective coveralls, more than 1,400 "hazmat" suits and five boxes of surgical masks, as well as hand sanitizer, cleaning agents and industrial gloves.

"One of the [Tulane] doctors reached out to the Cajun Army. [The army] is a group of volunteers who help support communities through natural disasters, so they went to their warehouses and looked for the things that we had been asking for — cover gowns, masks, gloves, things like that — and loaded up everything they could find," said Sophie Foroughani, another third-year medical student and the vice president of the Student Clinic Council.

Donations came from across campuses, including School of Science and Engineering's Department of Cell and Molecular Biology, School of Liberal Arts' Department of Theatre and Dance, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University Special Collections, Newcomb Art Museum, Vorhoff Archives, Amistad Research Center and Middle American Research Institute.

School of Medicine continues to accept contributions of PPE to be used in local hospitals. Large or small quantities are greatly appreciated and can be dropped off at specified locations, but homemade items such as masks cannot be accepted at this time. [Click here for more information on donating PPE.](#)