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Taylor Alumni Restore Jobs and 'Remask America'

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Chad Cazel ('14) had a passion for entrepreneurship long before he started Remask America, a company that makes reusable face masks. As a student at Taylor, he would work in the engineering labs to create innovative projects. Cazel was the Student Director of the Space Program and created a self-balancing robot for his senior capstone. His excitement for invention and leadership paved the way for his post-college life.

When the Covid-19 pandemic began, Cazel knew it would be important to adapt to the new challenges. Joining forces with a past networking connection-turned-friend, Cazel pitched an inventive idea: using an artisan swimsuit business to make masks.

Now, five months in, Cazel and his team reflect on how Taylor prepared them for success and helped make Remask America what it is today. Not only does RA provide safe, quality masks for people around the U.S., it also provides hundreds of jobs for people in Costa Rica who are struggling in the midst of a pandemic. Their story is one of both innovation and empathy.

When an Idea Sparks

In his four years at Taylor, Cazel studied [Business Management](#), [Systems Engineering](#) and [Computer Science](#). A natural visionary, he didn't have a problem getting people on his team. In fact, he met Karen Elizondo—founder of Mar De Urano, an artisan swimsuit company in Costa Rica—at a music festival and made an instant connection.

In 2020, Cazel saw the need for proper face masks in hospitals and the health industry when the coronavirus pandemic started. When he presented the idea for face masks to Elizondo, she jumped on the opportunity to use her design skills and manufacturing locations for the new prospect.

Their vision was to spend five weeks making 50,000 masks for hospitals in dire need of PPE with \$50,000 in donations. Elizondo developed a simple, comfortable design. It soon became apparent their vision of a five-week stretch wouldn't be enough.

During Remask America's face mask endeavor, the CDC released the recommendation that every person should wear a face mask in public. This changed the game for the company, and the demand for their product skyrocketed. By providing masks for and partnering with companies such as Google, Toyota, UPS and Waste Management, RA quickly began to live up to the name.

Now, Remask America has a product that provides excellent comfort and adaptability.

According to their website, "All of Remask America's products are made from comfortable fabrics and are designed to ensure an ergonomic, close fit for masks that stay in place and work as hard as you do. Each design is manufactured to circulate in standard medical or industrial fleet cloth washing regimens for ease of reuse."

More than Masks

Covid-19 caused a job shortage in most parts of the world, with millions laid off from their jobs. Some of us know what it means to spend months without a job, and it was no different for the people of Costa Rica. Many people lost jobs or were furloughed with a feeling of uncertainty or fear.

When Remask America decided to manufacture products in factories in Costa Rica, hope swelled again. Over 320 Costa Ricans who lost their jobs due to Covid-19 have been hired by Remask America.

"We have so many different stories of people in Costa Rica," Cazel said. "There was one woman who was diagnosed with cancer when Covid happened. She lost her job and was trying to make money to pay for a procedure. We offered her a job and she was able to pay for her treatments. We see that people are really struggling and my heart goes out to them."

A video sharing the heart behind the Costan Rican people joining Remask America can be found [here](#).

Taylor Community Provides Strong Foundation

Josh Meredith graduated from Taylor in 2014 with his undergraduate degree in [Management](#) with a minor in [Entrepreneurship](#). This past spring he graduated from Taylor's Masters of Higher Education (MAHE) program.

In mid-spring, Cazel called Meredith and asked for his help in Remask America. From there, Meredith took on the role of Operations Director.

At the beginning, it was all about recruiting people to link up in support of Remask America. Meredith's job was and continues to be key in having a solid foundation. According to Cazel, Taylor is the platform from which they knew they could grow, and where they sought out people to add to their team.

"I call ourselves a Taylor initiative because we are based at Taylor," Cazel said. "We are so thankful for the Taylor community and what it provides for us."

Cazel was able to use Taylor connections like Meredith to get others on board with the project to Remask America. Soon they had expertise, donations and a group of willing teammates.

Cazel is impressed with how the [Business Department](#) has expanded since his time at Taylor. Now there are even more classes, programs and events to support students in their venture of faith-based entrepreneurship.

Check out the [Entrepreneurship](#) minor or our [Promising Ventures](#) program through the Calling and Career Office.



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