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3-23-2021

### Just Ask

Mitch Grieb

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# SCU IN QUARANTINE

*Our Pandemic Stories*

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EVENTS

## Just Ask

Mitch Grieb

Department Manager, Department of Art and Art History

With the mask mandate at the beginning of the pandemic, I needed a mask to go to the grocery store, so I pulled out my sewing machine, ordered fabric from Etsy and sewed a few reusable cotton fabric masks for my partner and myself. Then I made about a dozen for my neighbors in my apartment complex. I knew my family needed masks, so I made masks for all my family members. I made some more and posted my creations online, and people wanted them. I gave a mask away to whomever needed it. Family members, friends of family members, work colleagues, friends of work colleagues, a person in need on the corner—anyone who wanted or needed a mask, I gave them one for free.

On my trips to the grocery store, I would see kids wearing disposable masks that were too big for their little faces. I also saw an elderly gentleman wearing a piece of tape on his nose. It just broke my heart, but I knew I could help these people.

I got creative and starting packing kids' masks in a baggie and kept a bunch in my car. I also slipped an adult mask and five dollars in a baggie in case I ran into that gentleman again, which I did. Every time I saw a person who looks like they could use help, I gave them a baggie with a mask and five dollars. Every time I see a child with a disposable mask, I gave them a baggie with a kid's size mask.

After a few months of the pandemic, I wanted more masks just to have some variety. I needed to kill the time at home, and I love sewing, so I ordered prints in Hawaiian flowers, island and beach themed prints, cheetah prints and Disney prints online and just kept stitching. I got creative and starting making different sizes and ordered different colors of elastic. I now have a template that I use and can make large, standard and kids' masks. I cut and stitched batches



and batches of masks and posted them on Facebook and Instagram. People wanted to pay me for them, so I sold them for a low price of six dollars plus shipping. I sold out after every batch and if I had any leftover I would give them away.

I made dozens of mask for the employees at a friend's restaurant in Willow Glen and in exchange they would deliver yummy sushi dinners. I made masks for the friend-of-a friend's entire family. People commissioned me to sew them sports masks of their favorite football team. I made Halloween masks with witches, bats and cobwebs, fall masks with pumpkins and autumn leaves, Thanksgiving turkey masks, Christmas mask with Santa cookies and hot cocoa and, just recently, I made Valentines and St. Patrick's Day Shamrock masks, which were snapped up right away. My masks are worn by family and friends across California, Nevada, Seattle, Texas, Idaho, Ohio and as far away as Hawaii. I sew masks because I care and because wearing a mask is required. I've sewn and given away hundreds of masks, but I always keep a small inventory in case someone needs a mask. If you need a mask, just ask.

#mitchsmask

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