



Area senior making masks for the community

Selflessness has no age limit, and Mary French shows us just that. During this COVID-19 pandemic, Mary, 74, is spending her days and nights making masks. Mary is making the masks specifically for Cincinnati's African American community with the understanding that this Coronavirus is disproportionately impacting African Americans and other minority populations. As a matter of fact, a [report](#) from American Public Media's APM Research Lab found that African Americans have died from the disease at almost three times the rate of White Americans.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mary saw an opportunity to help. "I've volunteered all my life. I enjoy helping people – this is the best [volunteer] project I've ever done," she said. "I have lupus, and don't go out much anyway, especially now, so I stay inside and try to help."

Mary stays up all night (sometimes until 4:00 a.m.!) to sew masks using cotton bed sheets. She has heard from nurses that the elastic ear loops used in some masks can be irritating, so she hand-sews cotton ear loops on her masks.

So far, she has completed more than 60 masks, and she's still going strong. With the help of Council on Aging service providers and the City of Cincinnati, her handmade masks are being distributed to those that need them.