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In mid-March, American Roots Wear shut its factory down in order to evaluate the safety and well-being of our employees and their ability to work during the COVID-19 crisis. Within one week, American Roots, a 100% American Made and proudly USW Local 366 Union Made company, made the decision to move forward with re-tooling our current factory to produce desperately needed PPE for those on the frontlines of this crisis.

At the start of the Covid 19 pandemic, AR employed 28 hard working women and men, a majority of our team being new Americans with five languages spoken. In order to meet the demand of washable masks and Level 1 face shields we began ramping up hiring of stitchers, assembly workers, and quality control workers.

The country was in desperate need of the products we were making and we simply could not keep up. Thankfully, Common Threads of Maine, led by Dory Waxman and her team, immediately made the decision in early April to work in conjunction with our company to create an intensive mask training program that trained 45 new stitchers over a six week period.

Common Threads formulated the training module we needed, did the leg work on contact tracing of students for safety prior to being trained, and moved at lightning speed to feed over 40 new stitchers to American Roots. Without Common Threads becoming a part of the PPE discussion and quickly adjusting their program to fit our needs, American Roots would not have been able to scale as fast we did.

The ability to have trained stitchers begin employment at American Roots with knowledge of the core principles of sewing was essential to the success of our growth.

In solidarity
Ben and Whitney Waxman