

## Sobrato High School junior helps group fund and make masks for frontline workers

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## Gelasia Tiwana leads South Bay Chapter of Masking a Difference



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By Staff Report

Eager to give back to the community despite current limitations, a group of volunteers has organized efforts in which mask ambassadors machine sew masks, and card creators design heartfelt illustrations and messages. These efforts provide frontline workers and other facilities in

South Valley and throughout Santa Clara County with the personal protective equipment they need to stay safe from the coronavirus.

Gelasia Tiwana's chapter services Morgan Hill, Gilroy, Capitola, Santa Cruz, and Watsonville. The program aims to bring together people of all ages, ethnicities, and genders in a collective effort to combat the struggles they see in the community caused by COVID-19, she said.

"We use monetary donations to purchase materials, and our volunteers sew masks and make cards at home," she said. "These masks and cards are then distributed to essential workers, other organizations, and those in need."

Her chapter is partnering with Morgan Hill's Dunne Hill Fire Station, Valley Medical Center, and Narika Women's Shelter, she said. Across the 25 international chapters, they made more than 2,500 masks, and have a rapidly expanding team of volunteers.

"Since many cities now require face coverings for essential activities, we are in great need of volunteers and would like to expand our outreach to supply masks to those in our community who need them," she said.

The organization is completely student-led and was started in May by Nitya Devisetti, a senior at Cupertino High School.

Gelasia Tiwana is a junior at Ann Sobrato High School who took the initiative to keep South County residents healthy during the COVID 19 pandemic. She is partnering with friends across local and neighboring school districts, in starting a South Bay (South) branch of the growing international organization Ma(s)king a Difference.

## Details

In order to purchase materials to make the masks and fund the volunteer-based efforts, the group relies on the generosity from supporters to donate to the "Masking A Difference" GoFundMe page ([www.gofundme.com/f/masking-a-difference](http://www.gofundme.com/f/masking-a-difference)). After selecting a donation amount, by selecting "Gelasia Tiwana" as a reference under "Donation Details," local donor's funds will assist the South Bay Chapter in providing volunteers with needed materials.