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From Cohoes to Cape Town: Mohawk Paper Leverages Trans-Atlantic Partnership to Offer Ready-to-Use Field Hospital Rooms

[Cohoes, NY – March 28, 2020] [Mohawk Fine Papers](#), Inc. is reaching out to the medical community with an innovative solution for the projected shortage of hospital beds in New York State and throughout the country.

The fine paper manufacturer, whose 800+ employees have been designated as essential in New York, Ohio, and Massachusetts, is known for its specialty papers. But when employees started brainstorming about ways to help the local community during the COVID-19 crisis, they set their sights on a niche product usually sold as a way to construct lightweight, sturdy exhibits at trade shows.

The product, called Xanita Board, is manufactured by a startup in Capetown, South Africa and distributed by Mohawk in North America. It looks similar to corrugated cardboard, but its special construction makes it strong enough to bear weight. It can be cut to fit together like a jigsaw puzzle, so no tools are required to build three-dimensional, weight-bearing structures. The material is also remarkably lightweight and easy to ship.

Reacting to news reports that hospitals in New York and nationwide could run out of space in the near future, Mohawk's executive team reached out to engineers in South Africa to ask them if they thought Xanita Board could be used to easily construct hospital rooms. The team in Cape Town moved quickly. Less than 24 hours later, they sent a complete set of digital "cut files," which detail how to construct room dividers and patient beds for use in pop-up hospitals to help with patient overflow.

"We had hoped Xanita could assist with capacity needs during this crisis; we just didn't know how or what that would ultimately look like," said Rowan Maher, CMO at Xanita in Cape Town. "When Mohawk reached out for assistance, we jumped at the opportunity to help."

Xanita Board is sold in flat sheets that must then be specially cut. But since time is of the essence, Mohawk has partnered with DataFlow, a custom printing and signage company in Binghamton, NY to do the cutting of this complete field hospital room solution in advance. All the Xanita Board currently on hand at Mohawk is ready to be converted at a moment's notice into walls, beds, and other useful structures. It will then be shipped with easy-to-understand instructions so it can be built on-site in minutes, requiring no tools and simple nuts and bolts shipped with each kit. Because the boards are made from recycled cardboard, once the need for the temporary structures is complete, the units can be stored for re-use or turned back into pulp for paper.

“We want to remove any barriers, any friction that might slow down our ability to help the health care community,” DataFlow’s Dan Zimmerman said. “Partnering with Mohawk to provide pre-made kits seemed like the fastest way to get the job done.”

There is currently Xanita Board inventory on hand at Mohawk, with back up supply ready to ship to meet demand. The digital plans that explain how to cut and assemble the structures are available now and designed to be used with Xanita Board. Mohawk’s Vice President of Product Development, Mike Madura, said he hopes they’ll inspire more innovation.

“Now is not the time to hold back knowledge that could help protect our communities from this crisis,” Madura said. “For our merchants who have Xanita in stock, they’ll be able to easily offer these field hospital kits to their communities. And for any creative minds who want to help, we hope it will provide a foundation on which they can build their ideas.”

Mohawk is also offering warehouse space and logistical assistance to help expedite the transport of medical supplies, and expects to reconfigure some its converting facilities to speed PPE production for medical workers.

“We are ecstatic that this creative collaboration with Xanita and DataFlow has given us an opportunity to make a positive difference during a difficult time,” said Tom O’Connor III, Mohawk’s Vice President of Channel Management. “We hope no one needs these field hospital beds, but if they do, we would be proud to be able to help.”

Mohawk’s customer service is typically only available on weekdays, but right now, inquiries can be directed anytime to Tommy.OConnor@mohawkpaper.com. Requests for the field hospital cut files and any non-time sensitive questions should be emailed to mike.madura@mohawkpaper.com.

For more information and imagery, please [follow this link here](#).

ABOUT MOHAWK

Mohawk is North America’s largest privately-owned manufacturer of fine papers and envelopes which are preferred for commercial and digital printing, social stationery and high-end direct mail. Mohawk fine papers and envelopes include the signature brands Mohawk Superfine® and Strathmore®, as well as proprietary treatments Inxwell® and i-Tone®. With a culture of innovation reaching back to its beginning in 1931, Mohawk is committed to providing materials that help make every printed project more beautiful, effective and memorable.

As a leader in environmentally and socially responsible business practices, Mohawk was the first U.S. manufacturer of commercial printing papers to match 100% of its electricity with wind power renewable energy credits and the first U.S. premium paper mill to shift toward carbon neutral production. Mohawk’s portfolio of recycled papers is certified by Green Seal and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

Mohawk is a fourth-generation, family-owned and operated business based in Cohoes, New York, with global sales and operations located throughout North America, Europe and Asia. For more information, please visit mohawkconnects.com.

ABOUT XANITA

Xanita board is a sustainable, engineered fiberboard manufactured using fibers recovered from recycled paper products such as cardboard boxes. Xanita board is VOC free, 100% repulpable, 75% lighter than MDF and significantly stronger than honeycomb boards. Xanita board is designed to work with digital flatbed printers, hybrid printers and CNC cutters. Mohawk is the sole distributor of Xanita Board in North America. For more information, please visit xanita.com.

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