

Exactech Collaborates with University of Florida to Produce Nasal Testing Swabs During COVID-19 Pandemic

Gainesville, Fla. (May 21, 2020) – Exactech, a developer and producer of innovative implants, instrumentation and computer-assisted technologies for joint replacement surgery announced today a collaboration with University of Florida Health and UF's Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering to help meet the demand for nasal swabs used in COVID-19 testing.

With an existing 3D-printed nasopharyngeal swab design in hand, UF Health sought out a local, certified medical device production facility where the swabs could be produced quickly in accordance with federal guidelines. Thanks to a long-standing partnership between UF and Exactech, the collaboration between the two organizations was a natural fit.

“When UF Health asked us to explore alternatives to obtain more swabs to increase testing for the coronavirus, we were very pleased to learn that Exactech could help us quickly stand up an operation,” said Forrest J. Masters, Ph.D., a professor and associate dean of research and facilities at UF’s College of Engineering, who is credited with the idea. “Our community is fortunate to have such excellent resources and expertise in place.”

Exactech provided laboratory space at its Gainesville, Florida headquarters and a team of experts to quickly establish a fully functional production line for the UF staff to operate. The company shared its proficiency in 3D printing, quality systems, testing, manufacturing process documentation and familiarity with U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations. They were also able to provide four 3D printers in addition to the 10 contributed by local UF departments and partners. By early May, production capacity had reached approximately 4,500 swabs per day, with a goal of manufacturing 100,000 swabs over the course of the partnership. From Exactech, the swabs are sent to UF Health for final sterilization and packaging.

Exactech & the University of Florida

Exactech and UF have collaborated for decades, supporting mutual interests in the advancement of healthcare, education and mobility.

Exactech founders, Bill Petty, M.D., and Gary Miller, Ph.D., were faculty and research colleagues at UF prior to starting the company in 1985.

“One of the many benefits of this long-standing partnership has been our collaboration with UF’s world-renowned surgeons and faculty to develop the latest advancements in orthopaedics and biomechanical engineering,” Dr. Gary Miller said.

In 2016, Exactech proudly became the naming rights sponsor of Exactech Arena at the Stephen C. O’Connell Center, UF’s iconic sports and entertainment complex.

Exactech provides ongoing internships for UF students and employs dozens of Gator alumni.

The 3D printing process offers a significant advantage over conventional manufacturing because the swabs can be produced using computer-assisted design software and compact printers, according to Robin Barney, Exactech's senior vice president of operations and supply chain. "By having the right people, technology and procedures in place, Exactech was able to help rapidly expedite the production timeline," Barney said.

Exactech views this project as a welcome and timely continuation of its collaboration with UF. "We've collaborated with some of the world-renowned surgeons and faculty at UF Health on the advancement of orthopaedic implant designs that improve patient mobility," said Exactech CEO Darin Johnson. "Coming together now, to support testing for COVID-19, is an unexpected yet extremely rewarding milestone in our continuing association. We are honored to join forces in another true partnership in patient care."

**Photography available upon request, courtesy of UF Health.*

About Exactech

Based in Gainesville, Fla., Exactech develops and markets orthopaedic implant devices, related surgical instruments and biologic materials and services to hospitals and physicians. The company manufactures many of its orthopaedic devices at its Gainesville facility. Exactech's orthopaedic products are used in the restoration of bones and joints that have deteriorated as a result of injury or diseases, such as arthritis. Exactech markets its products in the United States, in addition to more than 30 markets in Europe, Latin America, Asia and the Pacific. Additional information about Exactech can be found at <http://www.exac.com>.

Exactech Media Contact:
Priscilla Bennett, APR
Vice President, Corporate & Marketing Communication
352-377-1140