COVID-19 Volunteer Opportunities

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COVID-19 R&D Database Project

Project Description: "We are building the most comprehensive and detailed database of vaccines and therapeutics for treating COVID-19 in the world so that everyone can be informed on the progress towards much better outcomes for patients in this pandemic. Our tech team is also building a fantastic website with visualizations to make the data engaging and informative. We are in need of people to help us research these products so that we can populate our database. This work would involve data entry and would require a careful, detail-oriented approach. Some background with biology and/or medicine is ideal for this work."
—Mats Olsen, Project Leader of COVID-19 R&D Database Project

More information about the progress that has been made on this project, people involved with this work, and what kind of volunteers are needed can be found below:
https://helpwithcovid.com/projects/29-covid-19-vaccine-and-treatment-r-d-dashboard.

Time Commitment: Each assignment consists of about 5 vaccines or therapeutics to look into and takes about 2-3 hours to complete.

How to get involved: If you are interested in helping with this research effort, please email Mats Olsen (matsaolsen@gmail.com)to receive your assignment of potential vaccines and therapeutics to investigate.

UV-C Light Cabinet to Decontaminate FFR Masks Project

Project Description: "The current shortage of filtering face piece respirators (FFR) might be alleviated if they could be reused by decontaminating them in a simple device (i.e. something that a DIY person could build and supply to hospitals, GP surgeries, etc.) There is evidence that a UV-C light cabinet might serve this purpose. This project seeks to develop such a cabinet using components from a variety of common sources, test its effectiveness for decontaminations against the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and then produce instructions for its construction and use. In this way people subsequently using the cabinet can have higher confidence in its effectiveness than they would by just exposing their masks to some form of UV-C light for a period that has not been properly assessed.

The big challenge at present is finding a reputable lab to partner with so we can validate the design as safe. This is something that needs to be addressed as lots of people seem to be buying UV-C lamps for decontaminating their masks (see Amazon) but have no guidance about using them effectively."
—Dr. Will Stott, PhD, Software Developer at Maximodex and leader of this initiative

A mockup of the UV-C cabinet design made by this team can be found here:
https://github.com/wpqs/C19UVCSteriliserForFFR/wiki/Prototype-Design-v4.0

More information about the overall project can be found here: https://helpwithcovid.com/projects/545-uv-c-light-cabinet-to-sterilise-used-ffr-masks

More information about a CDC study that investigated UV using radiation to decontaminate FFR masks can be found here: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2781738/

Time commitment: Flexible

How to get involved: After contacting him to volunteer with this project, Dr. Stott asked to reach out to Middlebury students and form a group of those interested in participating in this project. From there, these students will work together to make study designs and contact faculty members at Middlebury and together, this faculty-student group will help to conduct research to optimize the design and use of this UV-C bulb cabinet so that it can be used in the best way to decontaminate FFR masks. If you have any interest in taking part in such an effort, please reach out to me (tbraun@middlebury.edu) for more information.

Initiatives of the HMS COVID-19 Student Response Team

Project Description: This project was started by a group of medical students at Harvard Medical School who wanted to organize a response to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. They describe their mission as follows:

"This student-led team first gathered together on March 15th to rapidly develop an organizational structure to coordinate and augment the HMS student body response to COVID-19 in collaboration with the HMS administration, leadership, affiliated hospitals, and community partners. Currently, there are four overarching committees that are supported by hundreds of members across the student body. The structure will continue to evolve as the response grows. The Response Team embraces the principles of being adaptive, nimble, and inclusive for all initiatives that will optimize our collective impact as a medical student body."
—HMS COVID-19 Student Response Team

Time Commitment: This depends on the project in which you get involved but is flexible.

How to get involved: While the Middlebury students who are reading this are (likely) not current medical students, after reaching out to the HMS COVID-19 Student Response Team, I was made aware that anyone who is interested can be involved in this response. To do so, visit https://covidstudentresponse.org/ and click on the "campaigns" tab. From here, check out the different initiatives that are being pursued. These range from community activism to a PPE initiative. Contact information for the student leaders of each initiative is on that page, and these leaders can be contacted directly for more information about the projects and how to be involved.

Additional Opportunities to Volunteer

If you are interested in searching for other opportunities to volunteer remotely to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit https://helpwithcovid.com/projects and/or https://airtable.com/shr5QKQBdG2UIw4Ok/tblGh1k80hsOm716Q?backgroundColor=red&viewControls=on&blocks=hide&fbclid=IwAR15kivzNsPsuNCARsJQxmMv139mlN8ccG4ANxtx0vHL3Ut2bER1iL15as4f These are the sites from which I found all of these opportunities.

Additionally, if you have any further questions, please feel free to reach out to me at tbraun@middlebury.edu.