

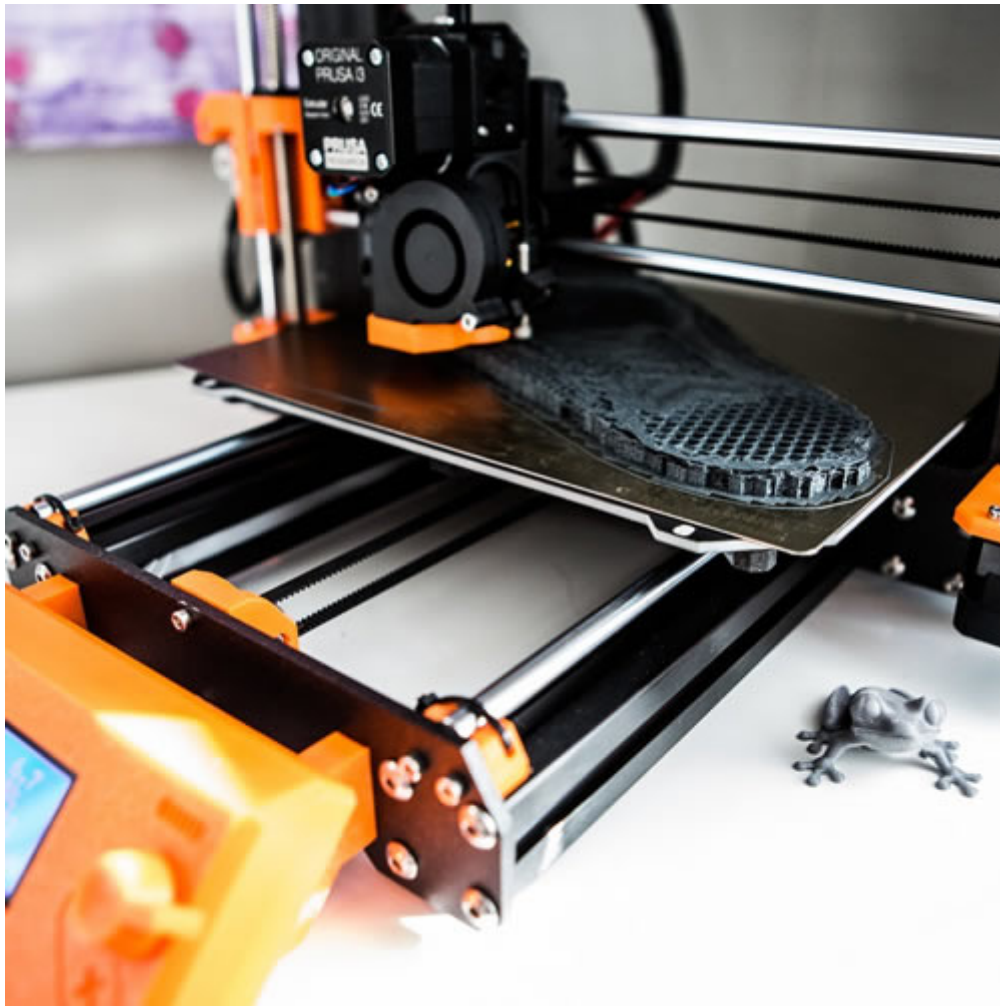
Runner to Debut Compostable Shoe in NYC Marathon



NYC Marathon runner, Mark Semler, creates a compostable shoe to promote sustainable plastics while running to end the cycle of poverty for children orphaned by AIDS in Uganda.

When Mark Semler was asked to run in the New York City Marathon to support the Nyaka School in Uganda, he searched for footwear that could withstand the rigors of the twenty-six-mile race and be returned to nature after its useful life had ended. Unfortunately, no such shoe existed in the marketplace. So, Mark decided to design and manufacture his own compostable racing shoe.

As the CEO of Zucker Institute for Applied Neurosciences (ZIAN) at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), in Charleston, South Carolina, a non-profit medical device technology accelerator, Mark has used 3D printing for over twenty years. He designed and printed a huarache style running shoe using an inexpensive Prusa Research 3D printer.



The biodegradable filament used to create the shoes was manufactured by Berlin-based, BioInspirations, using Terratek® Flex, a unique compostable elastomeric bioplastic created by Green Dot Bioplastics. The soft, rubber-like bioplastic is strong and durable, and will biodegrade when placed in an industrial composting environment.

The running shoe is designed to replicate the feeling of barefoot running, facilitating a more natural stride and better body mechanics, while protecting the feet from the New York City streets. The sole is attached with bamboo and cotton straps that are also biodegradable.



Mark is running to raise over \$10,000 for the Nyaka School in Uganda, where the HIV/AIDS pandemic is estimated to have orphaned over 1.1 million children who have lost one or both parents. In addition to the trauma of losing a parent, orphans go without many of the basic human needs including food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, and education. Due to limited government resources and social services, extended families and orphanages continue to face enormous obstacles in attempting to care for and educate orphans and other vulnerable children. Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project was born out of this crisis.



Mark's goal is to raise awareness of alternatives to traditional petroleum-based plastics while financially supporting Nyaka's mission to end the cycle of poverty for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. You can support his mission and donate to the Nyaka School by visiting his website at <https://nyakarunner5.com/>.



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