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BY JEFF HADEN, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, INC. @JEFF\_HADEN

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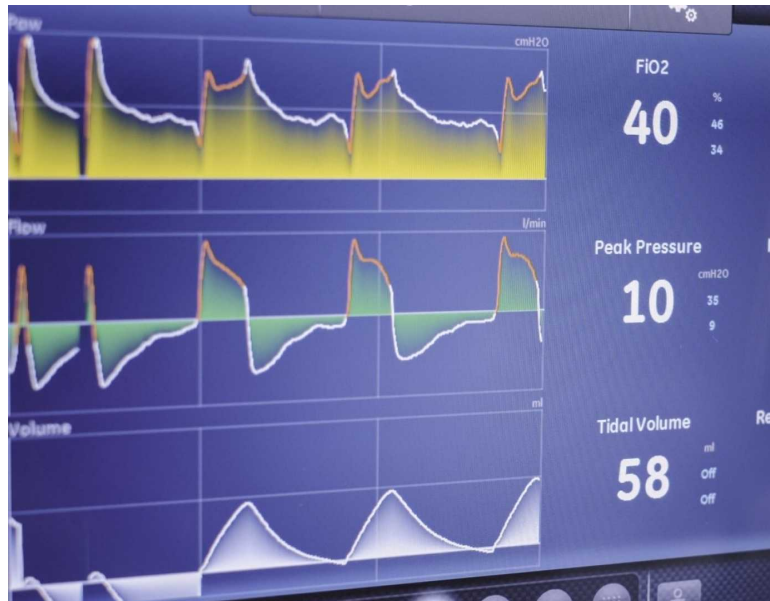
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A shortage of ventilators to treat Covid-19 patients potent problem that at least one state has created a statewide plan scarce critical care resources would be allocated. In the meantime, innovative entrepreneurs are working to fill gaps in life-saving medicine, the process, build new businesses.

One example: In less than twenty days, Vent Multiplexor, LLC designed and gained FDA Emergency Use Authorization for a device that took two, allowing each "split" to deliver individualized care to each patient. The work like a Y-splitter, simply splitting the same output into two feeds. Each patient receives the same output, regardless of his or her individual needs. The device gets delivered may be perfect for me... but not for you.)

How did the startup go from idea to implementation to approval? Brian Beitler and Tim Foldy-Porto, students at Yale University, created the design. Dr. Peter Kahn, a mentor to the students (and who now serves as Director for Vent Multiplexor) called attorney and entrepreneur Tim

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## How This Black Woman Investor Is Empowering Underestimated

"Peter says, 'It's smart, it works, and it could save lives,'" Higgins says. With where they were, saw they had a raw prototype that worked.. filed a patent. That was the first step: To create an intellectual property do it now. That mindset, that sense of not 'later' but 'now,' was the we did for the three weeks. There was never an alternative to 'now

Once the patent was filed the team spent the next three days further prototype while creating a business plan to turn the idea into a product the market saving lives when it still mattered.

"That was the mission statement, at least in my mind," Higgins says. pandemic."

That Sunday night, senior leaders -- including the Chief Medical Officer from Yale New Haven Hospital joined the team on a Zoom call for

"Even if you've been doing business for a long time," Higgins says. look at all these brilliant people and think, 'Do I belong here? An same thing: Wondering how someone like me is involved.'"

Clearly Higgins and the team did belong: The device clearly worked. implications obvious.

And Higgins realized that doctors, for all their knowledge and talent, were not the only entrepreneurs: People who make it their life's work to quickly turn ideas into reality.

"It was clear there wasn't really anyone else in a position to drive this forward," Higgins says. "I decided I guess it had to be me." Importantly, the hospital decided the device should immediately undergo testing and help establish a clinical pathway.

Two days later the startup reached an agreement with the hospital, agreeing to make the device for the hospital at cost and crediting the startup as a collaborator.

And two days after that, on April 1st, the startup filed an Emergency Use Authorization submission with the FDA. Even though no one on the startup had completed an EUA submission.

"To extrapolate a broader point," Higgins says, "in many ways this was the great equalizer and leveler, because no one really knows what the playbook is, so everyone is a potential participant in finding the solution."

"It turns out the FDA had assembled an exceptional cross-disciplinary team, amazing in their support, and in wanting to help make a difference."

During that time, and while the hospital was creating plans to deploy the device successfully co-ventilated individualized treatment protocols.

And on April 15, the FDA granted Emergency Use Authorization for the idea to execution.

According to Higgins, that never would have happened without the hospital's medical expertise, the startup's entrepreneurial expertise, and the FDA. Pull out any piece, and the whole puzzle would have fallen apart.

"The whole experience has been life affirming," Higgins says. "It's a reminder of the opportunities on the other side of the crisis: To be a part of changing the world to do things..."

"There are plenty of people more capable than me, but I deployed the idea."

There are a lot of smart people sitting on their intellectual, or stra  
resources... imagine what could be accomplished if everyone depl  
have."

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**He Knew Videoconferencing Was the Future 10 Covid Struck**



BY GRAHAM WINFREY, SENIOR EDITOR, INC. @GRAHAMWINFREY

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Meet the Startup Helping Farmers Make Money Off Their Land (but Not in the Way You Think)



Krish Ramakrishnan, co-founder of BlueJeans Network.

More than a decade before Covid-19 made remote work the new r Ramakrishnan aimed to democratize videoconferencing. In 2020, to a 400 percent jump in his company's traffic, his vision became a

### Livestreamer

In 2009, Ramakrishnan co-founded BlueJeans Network, a cloud-based videoconferencing startup.

### Two Guys and a PowerPoint

Ramakrishnan and his partner has no experience in videoconferencing, but they'd had enough successful business ventures to raise money for this one.

### Major Carrier

Telecom giant Verizon acquired BlueJeans in May 2020 for an undisclosed sum.

## Where did the original idea for BlueJeans come from?

In 2009, my co-founder, Alagu Periyannan, and I asked, why video, which is essentially a communication tool interoperable with anything else. You could use any device to any other device. The communication was that out. The videoconferencing industry didn't think businesses could benefit from interoperability. Interoperable communications is all about. We thought, why not a cloud-based video service?

## What was it like when Covid-19 led to a massive demand for videoconferencing services?

A few of our customers called me and said, "Next week, we're shutting down operations. All of our 10,000 employees are going to be working from home."

handle it?" I could have said, "Oh, my god, what are we going to do?" Our founder, who is very savvy technically, said we would keep our server in the cloud to make sure that videoconferencing becomes mission critical. No customer would want to make sure that videoconferencing becomes mission critical. No customer would want to make sure that videoconferencing becomes mission critical.

### **Was it difficult to negotiate the sale to Verizon without meeting with the company in person?**

It was entirely negotiated using BlueJeans, during a pandemic. In the exploration of the sale, because our potential buyer could see the value of this. It was a little challenging for the lawyers to use, but I had faith in the technology.

### **Did you ever consider taking BlueJeans public rather than selling to Verizon?**

BlueJeans could have taken that path, but we merged with Verizon to change the impact of videoconferencing for decades. As an entrepreneur, I was looking for. BlueJeans has been inserted into many applications, I think it's a great thing. There isn't a greater feeling of fulfillment than that.

### **Where do you see Verizon taking BlueJeans in the future?**

Remote learning is one example. It's not just for high schools and colleges, but also for training. You're going to have applications in field maintenance, work on, say, aircraft using videoconferencing. Remember, jobs have always been done remotely, but now video is going to be mainstream, like air and water.

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