

DesignerProfile

# Jonah Larson

## Crochet Prodigy

Images courtesy Jennifer Larson



Jonah's mom Jennifer says Jonah enjoys crocheting vintage and retro style items. These flowers are coasters but can also function as trivets. "Jonah also makes trivets that are like origami," Jennifer says, and confirms that he likes interesting designs.

## Natural Talent

When he was just five years old, Jonah Larson found a stray crochet hook in a box of supplies. It must have sparked his imagination, because shortly after, he taught himself to crochet from a YouTube video. His skill was immediately apparent, even at that age.

Now, at age eleven, Jonah most enjoys quietly crocheting near his mom, Jennifer. He is creative with a subtle sense of style and a keen knowledge of yarn applications. His bold use of color is especially inspiring.

Now this do-it-yourself crafter is gaining recognition in the mainstream media. Maybe even too much: it seems he had to temporarily shut down his thriving Etsy shop because the viral news coverage was generating too many orders for him to keep up.

Adopted from an Ethiopian orphanage as an infant, he donates part of the money he earns from his work to the children still living at the orphanage. Other proceeds go right back into his business for yarn and supplies.

With all his tactile skills, Jonah is perfectly poised to pursue his dream of someday becoming a surgeon. He's training for it by stretching his crochet powers; he cites his most difficult accomplishment as a blanket with 800 plush flowers on it. Besides that, his collection of awards and ribbons keeps growing — a recent count passed 70.

## A Friendship Based on Alpaca

Jonah learned about alpaca yarn well after he started crocheting. He used an alpaca blend and liked it because "it was soft and



This versatile cowl is made using "cake" yarn and can be worn by both men and women.

worked up nicely." But he had not yet used 100 percent alpaca.

A longtime member of the alpaca community, Frana Biederman owns Phi Beta Alpacas and Yarn in New Mexico. She met Jonah on Instagram where she saw Jonah teaching other kids how to crochet. Biederman began reading his individual posts and was "amazed by the craftsmanship."

"I loved the special braided cowl he created for his mom with buttons up the side," Biederman says. "The beauty of a cozy blue blanket with the stitches aligned jumped out from the page."

"I played some of his YouTube videos and was impressed by his enthu-

siasm and passion for what he did. I was even more amazed about his passion to give back to the village where he was born in Ethiopia."


Biederman commented on one of his Instagram posts, and Jonah thanked her. Biederman then told Jonah that she raised alpacas and sent photos of the alpacas that grow the yarn she makes.

At this stage, Biederman confirmed Jonah had never tried 100 percent alpaca yarn. She explained a lot to him about alpaca fiber, including micron count and softness.

"This was the beginning of our friendship," Biederman says.



Incredibly, “Jonah made this blanket in one day,” Jennifer says. “It was a cold winter day when school was called off because of the Wisconsin weather. This blanket uses loop yarn which Jonah enjoys working with. He only used his fingers to make it — no hook! It is referred to as a log cabin design.”

 **VIDEO:** See Jonah open up the package from Biederman and talk about alpaca fiber in his own words in his video. Search for: “Packages! Alpaca Yarn For Dad’s Hat!”

## A Challenge

Meanwhile, Jonah’s own dad threw down the gauntlet.

“Recently in one of my television interviews,” Jonah says, “my dad told the TV correspondent that I’ve never even made a hat for him despite the fact that he was bald!”

After that, hundreds of people have been asking Jonah to make his dad a nice hat.

Biederman knew how wonderful alpaca fiber is, so she went out of her way to encourage him and introduce him to one of Nature’s most perfect fibers, letting him pick which one he liked best.

“Jonah said he loved packages, so I wrapped up the charcoal tweed skein he chose, grown by Starshine and Midnight Moon, and added super soft natural true black from my alpaca Black Satin,” Biederman says.

“A lady who raises alpaca contacted me and educated me on alpaca yarn,”

Jonah says. “She was kind enough to send me 100 percent alpaca yarn to make my dad the best hat ever! My dad’s hat will be made from Satin, Midnight Moon or Cinnamon’s fleece — I have a few choices. I enjoyed seeing pictures of the alpacas the yarn came from.”

“I have the yarn now,” Jonah says, “and opened the package on my YouTube channel.”

At press time, Jonah had not yet made the hat for his dad, but Jonah is prolific, energetic and always learning so his dad will probably end up with many hats as he perfects his techniques.

Biederman says, “Jonah has love, enthusiasm, compassion and curiosity to learn. I admire him. You can see that by watching his YouTube videos. I was so touched when he took up almost an entire video sharing Phi Beta Paca Yarns™ with the world.”

“Jonah’s crochet sparkles as much

as his effervescent smile and appreciation for his thousands of fans who love his creations. I admire his passion, creativity and design skills.” ●



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