


## The RoughRider® Comes to the U.S.A.

Whirlwind will soon be offering our acclaimed RoughRider wheelchair in the U.S. Once final testing and adjustments to the RoughRider® are complete, Whirlwind will begin with a 100 person test market group. By early fall, sales will be opened to the general public via our website.

Whirlwind received FDA approval to sell the RoughRider® in the U.S. this past January. The chairs will be manufactured in Jakarta, Indonesia, by PT Dharma, an FDA-approved facility with exceptionally high quality manufacturing.

On a Buy-One Give-One program, for every chair sold in the U.S., Whirlwind will also deliver one to someone in need in the developing world. For many interested U.S. riders it is amazing that at the \$799 price, which is dramatically less than US market chairs, Whirlwind can deliver such a remarkable outdoor riding experience and do good abroad at the same time.

For years US veterans, rural Americans, and outdoor enthusiasts have asked for the RoughRider® because of its safety and handling in rough conditions on pavement and off. Whirlwind's Founder and Chief Engineer Ralf Hotchkiss likes to call Whirlwind's entry into the U.S. market an example of "trickle-up theory" because the RoughRider® was originally designed with and for some of the poorest of the poor in developing countries. Now, the benefits of more than 30 years of Whirlwind designs can be made available to wheelchair riders in the United States.

A photograph of an elderly man with grey hair and a mustache, wearing a plaid shirt and dark pants, sitting in a silver wheelchair. He is riding on a rocky, uneven trail outdoors. The background shows a clear blue sky and some green vegetation on the right side. The wheelchair has large front wheels and smaller rear wheels.

Experience the outdoors like  
never before in a RoughRider®

## PT Dharma



Workers in Jakarta take a break from building RoughRiders

The PT Dharma wheelchair factory in Jakarta, Indonesia, which already manufactures over 100,000 standard wheelchairs per year, is now manufacturing 50 RoughRiders® per day, with an expected increase to 100 per day within six months. This level of manufacturing is unprecedented for Whirlwind. Only a few years ago our best shops produced at most 250 wheelchairs per month. The big

increase in capacity allows Whirlwind to keep up with increasing demand for the RoughRider®—more have been ordered so far in 2011 than in all of 2010. Dharma produces other wheelchair models, including a standard hospital-style wheelchair and a sports chair. These other models will give Whirlwind access to more products to meet a wider range of needs and to serve a broader population. Larger scale manufacturing will allow Whirlwind to keep the price of the RoughRider® very low in the face of rising costs. By buying quality-certified parts and sub-assemblies from larger lower-cost manufacturers, our small shops will be able to save money.

## Making a Difference in Haiti



Kenny, Haiti's new wheelchair mechanic, shown here repairing a leg brace

**In May 2010 we distributed 300 wheelchairs in Haiti.** You may remember Vladimir, who we featured in our December Newsletter, and Wilguy and Kenny who appear in the video on our website. Vladimir needed two surgeries to stabilize his spine and prevent scoliosis, and he got them in Philadelphia thanks to the Shriners. He's now back at home and attending school in his village. Wilguy is now president of his high school class and has become an advocate in the small but growing disability movement. Kenny didn't have a home to go back to, and remains at St. Boniface hospital. He participates in soccer matches, and he has become a wheelchair mechanic. We hope to be able to hire him to work in a Wheelchair Provision and Assembly Center we plan to establish in Haiti with support from the Inter-American Development Bank later this year.

## Rwanda



A big smile on a shy girl: Solange and her mother head home with her new RoughRider

**In late April, the Walkabout Foundation delivered 250 RoughRiders® to people throughout Rwanda with the help of Partners in Health (PIH).** This project built on relationships that were established with Walkabout and PIH during the Haiti project last spring. Whirlwind contracted wheelchair provision trainers from Motivation Africa to train PIH staff in Rwanda prior to the distribution. Most of the people who received wheelchairs had either never had a wheelchair before or had a wheelchair that was beyond repair. You can visit: <http://walkaboutfoundation.org/blog/cat/updates/post/Rwanda/> for some compelling before and after photos.

## Manufacture and Assembly in Georgia

**Whirlwind is entering the 3rd and final year of our Georgia project with some solid success along with some important lessons learned.** Our Georgian partner is the Coalition for Independent Living (CIL), based in the capital, Tbilisi. We helped CIL set up its shop from scratch. Because most of the technological obstacles have been overcome, we are faced with a daunting business obstacle: CIL's high manufacturing costs make competition in the local market difficult. In response, Whirlwind and CIL are exploring the importation of already-manufactured components from other Whirlwind manufacturers to decrease costs. The CIL shop may become the first manufacturer in the Whirlwind Franchise Network to find an effective mix of locally manufactured and imported components. Production optimization will allow CIL to sustainably serve large numbers of wheelchair riders. Funding for this project originates from USAID and comes through the World Institute on Disability, our project partner.



Factory Founder, Giorgi Dzeladze (Right) and Andrya Urushadze, Georgia's Minister of Health

## Give the Gift that Keeps on Giving!



**Right now we urgently need \$49,000 to cover the costs of putting the RoughRider® into production in Indonesia and to get it ready for sale in the U.S. We need \$38,000 to pay for jigs and fixtures used in the manufacture of our improved 2010 model.** We need \$5000 for liability insurance, \$2000 for FDA registration expenses, and \$4000 for our website e-commerce system to handle orders in the U.S. In addition we will have other startup operating expenses which will eventually be paid for from sales revenue.

A generous donation could mean that many thousands of people will be able to get the 2010 RoughRider® including, for the first time, riders in the U.S. Funds from the sale of chairs in the U.S. will be used to support Whirlwind's ongoing efforts. This is more than a one-time donation opportunity: you will be investing in Whirlwind's future and in the future of wheelchair riders around the world.

**As you help Whirlwind you help change the world.**

Newsnotes designed by Dan Zhou edited by Keoke King and Marc Krizack

---

ADDRESS

San Francisco State University 1600 Holloway Avenue, SCI 251 San Francisco, CA 94132-4163 USA

WEBSITE

[www.whirlwindwheelchair.org](http://www.whirlwindwheelchair.org)

PHONE

415.338.6277

FAX

415.338.1290

EMAIL

[info@whirlwindwheelchair.org](mailto:info@whirlwindwheelchair.org)

---