

WHIRLWIND WHEELCHAIR

INTERNATIONAL

www.whirlwindwheelchair.org

Summer NEWSNOTES
2008

The Whirlwind Franchise Network



Individually boxed chairs ready for loading into a container in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

We are pleased to announce the inauguration of the Whirlwind Franchise Network. On August 1, CE Mobility of Johannesburg, South Africa joined the Kien Tuong Private Enterprise Wheelchair Company in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam to become the second factory to produce a *quality certified* Whirlwind RoughRider™ in high volumes. Two other factories, Fundacion Bertha O. de Osete in San Juan Del Rio, Mexico, and Pinnacle Industries of Indore, India, are expected to come online and be quality certified this Fall. Most of the production in Mexico and India will likely be destined for their own national markets; Kien Tuong and CE Mobility are each currently filling orders destined for Iraq and will export to other developing countries as well. The four factories are expected to produce about 15,000 RoughRiders™ in 2009, and up to 30,000 annually by 2011.

Quality Certification

The Vietnam and South Africa factories have met our quality certification standards for safety, strength, and durability. These mass produced chairs remain faithful to our longstanding design criteria of low cost local reparability. One of Whirlwind's responsibilities to our franchisees is help in finding buyers for their chairs. We retain a small portion of each sale to fund our ongoing quality control, design, and expansion programs.

Mexico

Established in 1996, the Fundación Bertha O. De Osete I.A.P, producing under the Movi brand, has been working with Whirlwind for nearly a decade. In March 2008, Whirlwind and Bertha

agreed to move forward with the introduction of the RoughRider™. The initial tech transfer occurred in July. We are currently testing the preproduction prototypes to ensure quality.



Welder working on a side frame at CE Mobility in Johannesburg, South Africa. Worker health and safety remain paramount.



Truly International: Colombian engineer Jaime Echeverry explains to Mexican engineers how to test and inspect a hardened bolt.

India

Last Fall, Whirlwind and the BMVSS

company of Jaipur, India signed an agreement to build the RoughRider™ at Pinnacle Industries in Indore, India. Pinnacle makes office and automotive seating and also molds the world famous "Jaipur foot." Profits from the sale of RoughRiders™ will be used by BMVSS to subsidize the cost of artificial limbs. Both BMVSS and Whirlwind are past "Tech Laureates" of the San Jose Museum of Technology, and this collaboration is one of only a few among award nominees.



Pinnacle's skilled welders will have little trouble welding the RoughRider's parts.



Indian workers sand bus seat frames prior to painting at Pinnacle Industries. These workers can easily transfer their skills to the manufacture of wheelchairs.

All four of the factories employ many wheelchair users as well as people with hearing and speech impairments. CE Mobility has outsourced production of our wheelchair brakes to JOCOD, the Johannesburg Council for the Disabled, a job training center for adults with disabilities.



Disabled worker makes RoughRider™ brake as part of job training program in South Africa.

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A Training in Jordan

This past June, Whirlwind Chief Engineer Ralf Hotchkiss and experienced Whirlwind trainer and Physical Therapist Patty Ruppelt traveled to Amman, Jordan to teach a workshop at the Al-Hussein Society (AHS) funded by the Chicago-based Center for International Rehabilitation. AHS is a comprehensive rehabilitation center for children with physical disabilities where wheelchairs and medical, physical, and occupational therapy services are provided.

The goal of the training was the responsible transfer of the Whirlwind kids' wheelchair, called the ChiQi™, to local therapists and technicians. Seventy ChiQi™ and adult Whirlwind wheelchairs had been manufactured in India at Worth Trust and shipped to AHS.

Fifteen physical and occupational therapists and rehabilitation technicians from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine participated in the workshop.

During the training, participants discussed and practiced wheelchair assessment, evaluation, and fitting. The ChiQi™ wheelchair adjusts to grow with a child and offers great mobility opportunities for children who are active and do not need extra postural support.

The immediate future goal of the Whirlwind kids' project is to provide options for children who need extra supportive seating in order to participate fully in family, school, and community life. We hope to continue our relationship with AHS as the future project develops. ●



Therapists getting the hang of the ChiQi's height and width adjustable footplates.



Ralf Hotchkiss has no trouble exploring Petra, one of the world's archeological wonders, in his RoughRider™.

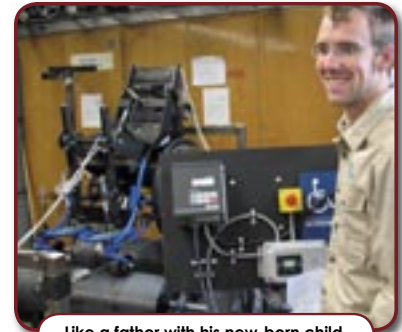


Young Mohammed, born with Spina Bifida, tests the ChiQi's unique curb descending abilities as a therapist watches with amazement.

Clunk Clunk Clunk...

Whirlwind gets a double drum tester

With support from Instructor and all-around Whirlwind handyman Bob Incerti, and Bearing Agencies of San Francisco, Whirlwind's Chris Howard has built a double drum testing machine that will be used to fatigue test Whirlwind's product designs. If run continuously the double drum test simulates 5 years of use over cobblestone streets in about 3 days and nights. In order to meet the ISO specifications, a wheelchair weighted with a 100 kilo (220 pound) dummy must be able to withstand 200,000 cycles on the double drum without breaking. ISO standards are based on the European environment, so Whirlwind builds its chairs to twice the ISO test standard which should ensure they do not break in the rougher conditions of developing countries.



Like a father with his new-born child, Chris Howard stands proudly in front of the double drum tester he built. Automation allows the test to be carried out with very little supervision.

INVEST in Whirlwind

FACT: *Thousands of Whirlwinds have already been pre-ordered and we have one major purchaser ready to buy thousands more. Now we just have to get them built.*

Your gift NOW will help guarantee Whirlwind's financial sustainability within two years even as it helps provide tens of thousands of excellent wheelchairs to people in need. Since January we have been racing to set up larger scale production – and spending a lot more than we were receiving in donations. We even took out a loan in order to avert an immediate cash flow crisis, and we will continue at this pace for the next 1-1/2 years, during which virtually all of our unrestricted funds will be allocated toward achieving our current paramount goal: financial sustainability.

A generous gift NOW will ensure that we have enough to sustain operations until we can recoup initial costs. We will use your gift as we would a true investment (although as a non-profit enterprise Whirlwind cannot return capital or dividends to you), since right now your gift will lead directly to a very solid dividend: increased and recurring income for Whirlwind.

Send your check today, or donate online at <http://www.whirlwindwheelchair.org/donate.htm>

As you help Whirlwind you help change the world.



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