



**National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society**
Michigan Chapter



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2007 da Vinci Award® Winners Announced Honoring Adaptive and Assistive Inventions

Southfield, Michigan – July 31, 2007 - Presented by General Motors, and chaired by Chet Huber, President of OnStar Corporation, the 2007 da Vinci Awards will be held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Dearborn, MI, on Friday, September 28, 2007. Funds raised through these awards support the National MS Society in their continuing efforts to aid those affected by multiple sclerosis.

In the spirit of the 15th century artist and visionary Leonardo da Vinci, *the da Vinci Awards* honor the most innovative developments and research in adaptive and assistive technology that embrace the Universal Design Principle - an approach to the design of products, services and environments to be usable by as many people as possible regardless of age, ability or circumstance.

The following are the 2007 da Vinci Award Winners for Adaptive Technologies:

EagleEyes (www.EagleEyes.org)

EagleEyes allows people to control the computer by moving only their eyes. EagleEyes works through five electrodes placed on the person's head. Developed at Boston College and licensed to the Opportunity Foundation of America, EagleEyes is provided free of charge to users.

FuelCall System (www.inclusionsolutions.com)

The FuelCall™ System enables drivers with disabilities to know which service stations provide assistance and easily summon this assistance. The FuelCall™ touch pad is mounted at a designated island at the station, accessible to the driver. The touch pad is connected to a receiver inside the store thereby alerting employees that a customer needs refueling assistance.

Handybar (www.handybar.com)

Handybar® is a strong, lightweight aluminum portable handle with a non-slip, comfortable Pantene medical grip that fits securely into the vehicle door striker plate, enabling easy entrance and exit from a vehicle. Handybar is available all over the world.

INDEPENDENCE® iBOT® 4000 Mobility System (www.ibotnow.com)

The INDEPENDENCE® iBOT® 4000 Mobility System is the brainchild of renowned inventor and 2002 da Vinci Lifetime Achievement Awardee Dean Kamen, founder of DEKA Research & Development. The iBOT® Mobility System is sold and manufactured by Independence Technology, a Johnson & Johnson company. The iBOT® Mobility System is unlike any wheelchair on the market today as it allows users to power across sand, gravel, grass and other uneven terrain, easily climb curbs up to 5" and steps, rise to an "eye-level" position and hold a conversation, even while on the move.

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2007 da Vinci Award Winners Announced (contd.)

PROPRIO FOOT (<http://www.ossur.com/?PageID=2759>)

The world's first intelligent foot module, the PROPRIO FOOT™ provides unprecedented physiological benefits for amputees. A wide and automated range of ankle flexion with Flex-Foot dynamics means function is as close as you can get today to the human foot.

The PROPRIO FOOT™ responds to changing terrain and transforms the approach to stairs, slopes and level-ground walking. The effect better balance and symmetry, more confident gait and reduced stress on the back, hips and knees.

WalkAide (www.walkaide.com)

The WalkAide® System is designed to assist users with foot drop, due to stroke, spinal cord injury, MS or cerebral palsy. It employs Myo-Orthotics™ technology. Myo-Orthotics technology restores the functionality of an impaired extremity by mimicking and recreating natural nerve-to-muscle response using electrical stimulation. The AA battery-operated WalkAide® is small in size and worn around the leg, just below the knee.

Special Awards:

da Vinci Founder's Award:

Roger McCarville has spent more than 25 years as an advocate for the disabled. In 1975 Mr. McCarville became disabled after falling from a boat and having his legs severed. One leg was reattached and is partially functional while the other has a prosthesis. In 1995, after being diagnosed with leukemia, he received a bone marrow transplant. Throughout the years he has been a leading voice on disability issues and has worked hard to change the face of sports and recreation for the disabled community.

da Vinci Apprentice Award:

Bubble Wrap Prosthetic Leg

(<http://www.standingwithhope.com/Grayson.cfm>)

Fifteen-year old Grayson Rosenberger of Nashville, Tennessee, has developed a low-cost Bubble Wrap covering for artificial legs. On a recent trip to Ghana he trained local workers to make the covering. These cosmetic coverings provide amputees in developing countries with a way to make artificial limbs more life-like, allowing them to blend into their communities.

da Vinci Lifetime Achievement Award:

Dr. Rory Cooper: Honoring a lifetime of significant contributions to advancing Accessibility. Dr. Cooper began his career in the United States Army and in the late 1970s qualified to represent the U.S. Army during the Olympic trials. Unfortunately, his Olympic aspirations were derailed by a tragic accident, which left him paralyzed. After his spinal cord injury, he earned his undergraduate, masters, and doctoral degrees in engineering. Dr. Cooper's energy and devotion to the field of rehabilitation engineering and assistive technology are unmatched. Dr. Cooper is Director of the Human Engineering Research Laboratory at the University of Pittsburgh and Co-Director of the Quality of Life Technology Center.

The Spirit of da Vinci Award:

Dana Bowman, former U.S. Army Golden Knight skydiver for his courage, perseverance and creative use of assistive technology. Bowman employs various assistive technologies in the prosthetic legs he wears to parachute, combining different types of braces, sockets and joints in order to manage the unique stresses a skydiver encounters in the course of a jump.

Corporate sponsorships and individual donations are welcome. Event tickets and group tables are still available. For information, please contact Leslie Kota – 248-936-0349 or visit www.davinciawards.org