

2016

ANNUAL REPORT

TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH
THE GIFT OF MOBILITY



Free Wheelchair Mission

is a humanitarian, faith-based, nonprofit organization that provides wheelchairs at no cost to people with disabilities living in developing nations. In collaboration with a network of like-minded partners, FWM has been providing wheelchairs to those in need around the world since 2001, offering dignity, independence, and hope through the gift of mobility.

Board of Directors

Steve Adkinson

Deborah Anderson

Douglas R. Circle

Jim Franklin

Chairman

Denny Kromer

Chief Financial Officer

Stuart Rattray

Connie Salios

Don Schoendorfer, PhD

Founder and President

Laurie Schoendorfer

Secretary

Rev. Bob Shank

A MESSAGE FROM DON

Greetings, Friends of Free Wheelchair Mission:

When I built my first prototype wheelchair, I did not intend to provide the transforming gift of mobility to one million people! I had been moved by compassion for a woman I had seen crawling in the dirt, and my hope was to build 100 durable, low-cost wheelchairs for the developing world because I believed that no one should have to crawl.

Today, thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the dedication of our staff, and the faithful work of our distribution partners, Free Wheelchair Mission has transformed nearly one million lives through the gift of mobility.

It is true, as Mother Teresa once said, that *“Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.”* I intended to do a small thing when I created the “GEN_1” wheelchair using a plastic lawn chair, mountain bike tires, and a steel frame. Perhaps you feel like you do a small thing when you give a gift of \$80 to Free Wheelchair Mission, and I suppose that our distribution partners feel like they do a small thing when they travel to a remote place and assemble a single wheelchair for one person living with a disability in a developing nation. But, when we do those things with great love and great compassion, together we accomplish great things.

In 2017, Free Wheelchair Mission will celebrate one million lives transformed through the gift of mobility. I have personally distributed thousands of free wheelchairs, and I can tell you that every single person who receives one considers it a great thing.

Imagine what it feels like to receive the gift of mobility after years, or decades — or even a lifetime — of waiting for someone to carry you! For those recipients, it is a great thing to gain independence; to leave home and interact with friends and neighbors; to pursue an education or gainful employment; to feel the sun shine on their face.

In this annual report, you will read about our strategic initiatives, our programs, our financial position, and our geographic reach. But the most important pages you will read are the stories of the individuals whose lives have been transformed by the great love of everyone who makes Free Wheelchair Mission possible.

It is an honor to serve this great cause in my small way. Thank you from the staff and board of directors at Free Wheelchair Mission for allowing us to show God’s great love to some of the people who need it the most.

Blessings,



Don Schoendorfer
Founder and President



NEED & VISION

BECAUSE NO ONE SHOULD HAVE TO CRAWL

THE NEED IS GREAT

For people with disabilities living in the developing world, the gift of mobility means freedom, independence, and hope. Without this gift, more than 100 million people live in helplessness and despair. Already suffering from the pain and isolation of a physical disability, many must endure further burdens – forced to crawl on the ground and often unable to leave their homes or even care for their own basic needs.



THE SOLUTION IS SIMPLE

Our wheelchairs are simple, cost-effective, and highly functional. They are designed to be resilient enough to withstand regular use in rugged terrain that is common in the developing world. Our wheelchair design and provisioning model allow us to maximize our impact around the globe, striving toward our goal of providing the transforming gift of mobility to as many people as possible while still maintaining a high standard of excellence. We partner with like-minded organizations to reach people in some of the most remote regions on the planet.

YOUR IMPACT

When you give the gift of mobility, you give someone the chance to breathe fresh air, visit friends and neighbors – even go to school or get a job. The transforming gift of mobility changes everything. Mobility means independence, the ability to participate in society and earn a living. It means dignity, leaving behind the days of living on the ground and being an outcast. In 2017, we are celebrating one million lives transformed, but many more people still need our help. Get involved today and you will bring transformation that opens doors for individuals around the world.




STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

2016 OUTCOMES

The creativity and innovation of Dr. Don Schoendorfer led to the creation of Free Wheelchair Mission in 2001. For more than 15 years, Free Wheelchair Mission has continued to pursue creative and innovative ways to fulfill our mission “to provide the transforming gift of mobility to people with disabilities in developing nations as motivated by Jesus Christ.”

During fiscal year 2016, this core value of “innovating to provide transformative mobility solutions” led to further growth, development, and expansion in three key areas:


DISTRIBUTION PARTNER TRAINING PROGRAM



In order to increase the effectiveness, utilization, sustainability, and safety of the products that we provide, Free Wheelchair Mission offers in-person training, remote trainings, and a combination of the two for wheelchair distribution partners around the world. This training includes interactive activities, practical application, and classroom-style discussion-based activities; all developed in partnership with occupational therapists, physical therapists, and education professionals known as “Team Transformation.”

More than 600 people have participated in this training program since 2012, helping our distribution partners develop efficient, high-quality processes. In the future, we will expand the program with quarterly video and pictorial training sessions for continuing education and updates about product design changes.


INCREASED CAPACITY IN CENTRAL AMERICA



Free Wheelchair Mission recently launched a project to increase the capacity of our distribution network in Central America, to encourage more collaboration with our partners there, and – most importantly – to enable deeper transformation for every wheelchair recipient.

FWM’s Program Relationship Manager visited the 15 distribution partners in Central America to evaluate the network and create an action plan for 2017. Beginning in January 2017, a new Regional Coordinator will lead regional trainers and analysts to provide additional training and resources in Central America. Ultimately, the team’s goal is to ensure that all distribution partners in Central America can grow with Free Wheelchair Mission and meet the mobility needs of our recipients there.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT TEST TRACK



With funding committed in 2016, Free Wheelchair Mission is preparing to construct a whole-wheelchair test lab at our headquarters in Irvine, CA. The test lab will propel wheelchairs over repeated obstacles while continuously monitoring stress, strain, accelerations, and temperature rise due to friction. The obstacles will simulate the same types of obstacles that wheelchair users commonly encounter in developing-world conditions.

Until now, Free Wheelchair Mission has been able to evaluate its wheelchair designs only by field-testing samples and monitoring the results. This process is expensive, takes a year or longer, and the data received is often ambiguous. The new test lab will compress a full year of field testing into a few hundred hours of lab testing, which will greatly accelerate the product improvement program by providing reproducible data. As a member of the Board of Directors of the International Society of Wheelchair Providers (ISWP), Founder and President Don Schoendorfer will make the test lab services available to other ISWP members that produce wheelchairs for the developing world.

STORY FROM THE FIELD – ZAMBIA

16-YEAR-OLD JOSEPH'S STORY

Life in Zambia has not been easy for Joseph. When he started school, his friends had to carry him on their backs. When his friends were not available, **Joseph used to crawl to school so he wouldn't miss a lesson.**

In 2014, Joseph was excited to receive a used wheelchair from a nearby church. While it helped him get around at first, the wheelchair was not in good shape. As time passed, the condition of the wheelchair continued to deteriorate and he was eventually unable to use it.

During this time, Joseph's academic performance declined as well. He started missing lessons and began losing interest in school. At just 16 years old, he said, **"There used to be times when I felt like giving up on life."**

Joseph's life was transformed when he received a new wheelchair through Free Wheelchair Mission's partnership with World Vision.

He said, **"I now feel like I am in a new world; everything has changed and all the challenges I used to go through are now a thing of a past. This wheelchair is now my new pair of legs, which can take me anywhere I want to go."**

When he completes his education, Joseph wants to become a doctor so he can bring hope to other vulnerable children in his community. **"I am very grateful,"** he said with a smile. **"I shall forever be grateful."**



OUR/YOUR IMPACT

FISCAL YEAR 2016



- PARTNER TRAINING IN FY 2016
- VISION TRIPS IN FY 2016
- POINT OF MANUFACTURE

- FREE WHEEL HEADQUARTERS
- REGIONAL



WHEELCHAIR MISSION
PORTERS

LOCATIONS

WHEELCHAIRS SHIPPED TO DATE

- 550-4,999
- 5,000-9,999
- 10,000+

WHEELCHAIRS DELIVERED

933,607

TOTAL COUNTRIES

93

TOP 5 COUNTRIES SERVED:

1. VIETNAM (146,661)
2. INDIA (97,470)
3. CHINA (82,980)
4. PERU (60,282)
5. PHILIPPINES (39,600)

GIFT-IN-KIND PROGRAM

RESTORING MOBILITY BEYOND WHEELCHAIRS

Because our mission is “to provide the transforming gift of mobility to people with disabilities in developing nations as motivated by Jesus Christ,” we give people more than free wheelchairs. Through our “Gift-in-Kind” program, we sometimes offer crutches or walkers to people who do not need wheelchairs but still require assistance for mobility. In other, more extreme, cases we provide aid that will prevent, or reduce the severity of, a disability through surgery or rehabilitation.

A small but significant portion of our work at Free Wheelchair Mission falls into our GIK program, allowing us

to assist people like one-year-old Chuc (see next page) without providing a wheelchair. Through collaboration with our distribution partners and local orthopedic hospitals, Free Wheelchair Mission has already helped arrange for dozens of surgeries that resulted in normal or close to normal mobility for people like Chuc.

In 2017, we intend to grow our Gift-in-Kind distribution partner network to provide mobility beyond wheelchairs to people in developing nations.

GIK PARTNER SPOTLIGHT GIVING IT BACK TO KIDS

Founder

Robert Kalatschan

Headquartered In

Huntington Beach, California

Mission

Transforming lives through education, medical care, nutrition, and love

Founded In

April 2002

What countries does your organization serve?

Vietnam and Cambodia

Who does your organization serve?

Underprivileged children and their families

How long have you been working with FWM’s GIK program?

Since Sept. 2013

How does FWM’s GIK program augment your mission?

FWM’s GIK program allows GIBTK to help more children and their families living with mobility disabilities. The program also gives GIBTK more credibility with the government; allowing our organization to work more freely, especially with our “out-of-the-box” programs.

Number Served Through FWM’s GIK Program

2,014

Number of Surgeries Performed

1,458

Common Surgeries

Bowlegs, hip-joint dislocation, contraction of tendons, and degenerative knee

Partner Hospitals

Danang Orthopedic Hospital; VINH Duc Hospital; Quy Nhon Orthopedic & Rehabilitation Hospital

Mobility Aids Handed Out (not including wheelchairs)

194

How can we learn more about your organization?

Visit our website: www.givingitbacktokids.org





STORY FROM THE FIELD – VIETNAM

ONE-YEAR-OLD CHUC'S STORY

One-year-old Chuc was born with clubfoot, a common disability that causes one or both of the feet to twist out of position. Chuc's family is one of the poorest in their small Vietnamese village, and they could not afford surgery to correct her disability. In fact, **Chuc's parents had no plans to treat her clubfoot until they learned that the condition would not correct itself.**

Thanks to Free Wheelchair Mission's Gift-in-Kind program, Chuc underwent two corrective surgeries in

2016 at no cost! She wore special boots for three months after the surgery to prevent her feet from returning to their previous position.

Now the boots are off, Chuc is already more joyful, and her parents are extremely happy that their daughter's feet are in the correct position. **One day, Chuc could learn to walk or even run like her five older siblings!**

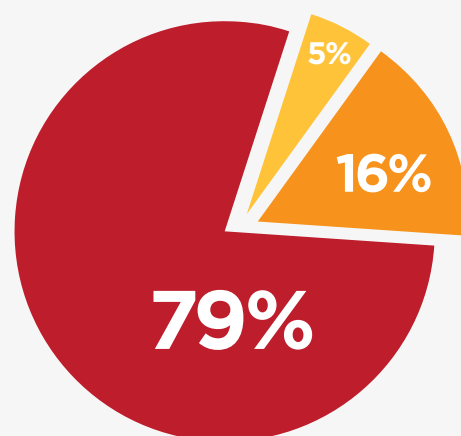
FISCAL YEAR 2016 FINANCIALS

In 2016, we continued to maximize our effectiveness as we delivered the gift of mobility by maintaining a program ratio of 79%. Thanks to donors and partners like you, we changed the lives of over 77,000 individuals and families around the world.

NOTE: Fiscal years reflect July 1 through June 30 of 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectfully.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION			
Assets	2016	2015	2014
Total Current Assets	\$1,714,776	\$1,756,157	\$1,091,960
Other Assets	\$376,667	\$728,746	\$567,082
Total Assets	\$2,091,443	\$2,484,903	\$1,659,042
Liabilities & Net Assets	2016	2015	2014
Total Current Liabilities	\$120,161	\$208,591	\$323,628
Deferred Liability	\$157,429	\$145,459	\$91,722
Total Liabilities	\$277,590	\$354,050	\$415,350
Net Assets:			
Unrestricted/Undesignated	\$973,740	\$793,629	\$481,113
Temporarily Restricted	\$840,113	\$1,337,224	\$762,579
Total Net Assets	\$1,813,853	\$2,130,853	\$1,243,692
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$2,091,443	\$2,484,903	\$1,659,042

Expense Allocation



- PROGRAM SERVICES
- FUNDRAISING
- GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES			
Support & Revenue	2016	2015	2014
Contributions	\$6,938,516	\$7,152,693	\$7,060,225
Gift-in-Kind	\$3,027,237	\$3,251,469	\$1,107,144
Other Revenue	\$96,749	\$110,691	\$131,064
Total Support and Revenue	\$10,062,502	\$10,514,853	\$8,298,433
Expenses	2016	2015	2014
Program Services	\$8,215,792	\$7,625,009	\$6,367,394
General and Administrative	\$552,252	\$506,292	\$465,650
Fundraising	\$1,611,458	\$1,496,391	\$1,150,528
Total Expenses	\$10,379,502	\$9,627,692	\$7,983,572
Net Assets	2016	2015	2014
Change in Net Assets	(\$317,000)	\$887,161	\$314,861
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$2,130,853	\$1,243,692	\$928,831
Net Assets, End of Year	\$1,813,853	\$2,130,853	\$1,243,692

As a result of our financial transparency and accountability efforts, we are proud to be recognized by the following charity rating organizations:



STORY FROM THE FIELD – PERU

50-YEAR-OLD ALEJANDRO'S STORY

Alejandro has never been able to walk, and he has not spoken in more than 20 years. He is now 50 years old and lives with his mother, Fortunata, in a remote Peruvian village. Alejandro's father died when he was just a little boy.

Fortunata has never been ashamed of her son or his disabilities. She says he is her perfect gift! Still, Fortunata did not want to carry Alejandro to school when he was a boy because she was afraid that he would be mocked. As a result, Alejandro never went to school.

In his adult years, Alejandro has done his best to help his mother. He works in the field—cultivating the land and caring for animals. Sometimes, he stays at home to do the cooking. But until recently, **he always had to crawl on the ground to go anywhere or do anything.**

When Alejandro received his free wheelchair from FWM, he was unable to say thank you, but the smile on his face communicated more than words ever could. Even though he had never had a wheelchair before, **Alejandro immediately knew he would no longer have to crawl in the dirt** thanks to this wonderful gift. Fortunata cried tears of joy, and expressed her heartfelt thanks as she watched her son experience the transforming gift of mobility for the first time in his life.



BECAUSE NO ONE SHOULD HAVE TO CRAWL



www.freewheelchairmission.org

15279 Alton Parkway, Suite 300, Irvine, CA 92618 | 949.273.8470