

2010 Off to a Record Breaking Start for The Starkey Hearing Foundation

Since January 1st 2010, the Starkey Hearing Foundation distributed over 25,000 free hearing aids throughout 5 countries including the United States. “The need has never been greater,” says CEO and Founder Bill Austin. “On March 25th we fitted 1,013 children with hearing aids in Kolkata India, nearly doubling the previous record set for fittings in a 24 hour period.” Since 2000, the Starkey Hearing Foundation has distributed 442,000 hearing aids throughout 86 countries and has set a goal of 100,000 a year and one million in this decade.

In early February, Bill and Tani Austin and Foundation volunteers set out for 60 days of non-stop travel through five countries and 13 cities. First stop on the mission trail, **Nairobi**, the Capital City of **Kenya**. With a growing population of over 3.2 million, the need for improved hearing health continues to grow. Through the generosity of mission sponsors, Glen and Marilyn Nelson, 1484 hearing aids were distributed to those in needs in just three short days.



A young patient shares the joy of his new found gift of hearing with Marilyn Nelson

Located in the center of Mexico, guarded by a 15,000 foot volcano, is the City of **Toluca** and the host location for a Starkey hearing mission, February 24th through the 30th. The Starkey Hearing Foundation fitted over 500 patients each day, distributing 6,000 free hearing aids. The mission was made possible through the support of the Starkey Canada. Jason Toone, Managing Director of Starkey Canada, notes: “Our work with the Starkey Hearing Foundation missions has changed our lives. The smiles on the faces of the children we give the gift of hearing to, is the best reward.”



“I hear you” says the smile of this Toluca boy

The two largest cities in **Honduras**, **Tegucigalpa** and **San Pedro Sula**, served as a “home away from home” for tireless Foundation volunteers and the gift of hope for hundreds of Honduran children the week of March 2nd. Thanks to the generous support of the Jim Zarley Family, 2,140 hearing instruments were distributed.

A Honduran Mother expresses tears of gratitude as her son hears her voice for the first time



Monterrey, known as the “City of the Mountains” was the first stop of four cities during the Starkey Hearing Foundation’s **Mexico** mission, March 18th through the 23rd. The mission was sponsored by the **Pepsico Foundation**, the Kraff-Orlin Family, Tadin Family and Keith and Cathy Nester. Stops along the way included the cities of Ciudad **Victoria**, **San Luis Potisi** and **Mazatlan**. Volunteers fitted nearly 4300 hearing aids in 6 days.



A young lady from Victoria listens intently to Bill Austin

“We live through what we give. Our best work is helping people. That is what life is about. Through our gifts to these children, our community and our world, we find our humanity.”

-Bill Austin

101 degree temperatures, eleven days, 11,000 hearing aids, and thousands of grateful smiles! March went out like a lion as first quarter’s mission marathon landed volunteers in the cities of **New Delhi, Jaipur, Ahmadabad and Kolkata India**. Through the tremendous support of the **PepsiCo Foundation**, Semiconductor and New Sound Hearing Aid Centers, the Starkey Hearing Foundation delivered the gift of hearing throughout India, March 25th through April 5th.

Larry Fitzgerald Jr., wide receiver for the Arizona Cardinals, worked side-by-side with volunteers throughout the eleven day mission. “There was a particular young man in Delhi who was physically challenged and feeling pretty down,” recalls Mr. Fitzgerald. “We put in the molds, tested his hearing and I’ll never forget how his face lit up. He was suddenly smiling and laughing. His father had never seen him that happy before. It was the first day of the missions and I was so encouraged and motivated by what I had seen.”



Larry Fitzgerald Jr. is entertained by a young patient from Delhi

The Austins recounted their visited to the compound of Mother Teresa on Good Friday. Traditionally, the order “Missionaries of Charities,” takes a vow of silence between Good Friday and Easter. However, this was a very memorable day when the Mother Superior, Sister Mary Preema, spoke to Bill and Tani Austin: “You have broken the silence for so many children throughout India, so I know that God would want me to break my silence to say thank you.”

For more information or schedule a media interview, please contact:

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