



Bill Austin Receives the Highest Non-Citizen Honor, Azteca Eagle Award, From the President of Mexico

Eden Prairie, MN (September 16, 2010) – Bill Austin, CEO and Founder of the Starkey Hearing Foundation, was presented with the Azteca Eagle Award by President Calderon on Tuesday September 14th at the Presidential Palace Los Pinos in Mexico City.

The Azteca Eagle Award is the highest honor bestowed by the Mexican Government to a non-citizen and was presented to Austin in recognition of his humanitarian service to Mexico. The ceremony was held in honor of Mexico's 200th Anniversary of independence celebration which begins today. US Secretary of Labor, Hilda Solis, attended the event along with numerous heads of state from other countries.

Since the Foundation's inception in 1973, the Starkey Hearing Foundation carries out several missions annually throughout cities in Mexico. "Mexico was start of our international outreach," said Austin. "We partnered with *Flying Samaritans* in 1973 to deliver hearing aids to the underprivileged in various Mexican communities." The demand for help throughout Mexico has increased over the past 35 years, with over 100,000 hearing aids distributed to those in need.

Four other US Citizens have received the distinguished Azteca Award; **Dwight D. Eisenhower, Ted Kennedy and Bill and Melinda Gates**. "I am very grateful to receive this honor in the name of the people who have made it possible," said Austin. "No one can do much alone. It takes a team to significantly impact the challenges we face in life."



The Starkey Hearing Foundation, "**So the World May Hear,**" is the global leader in hearing health care and is striving to change the social consciousness of hearing. Each year, the Foundation delivers the gift of hearing throughout countries stretching from the U.S. to Vietnam and has grown its capacity to give with over 500,000 hearing aids distributed to people in need since 2000. The Foundation is striving to achieve its goal of over one million hearing aids in this decade. In addition to giving the gift of hearing, the Foundation partners with Best Buy and the Grammy Foundation to promote "Safe Hearing" and prevention especially among teens, through its national program, **SoundMatters**.