

For Immediate Release
June 24, 2010



Air Force Lt. Ian J. Brown Demonstrates ReWalk™

JJP and Rick Hansen Institute Collaborate to Benefit Spinal Cord Injured Patients

Event Features Demonstration of the Ground-breaking ReWalk™ Device

BRONX, NY – On Tuesday, June 21, 2011, Iconic Canadian Paralympian, philanthropist and world-renowned accessibility advocate Rick Hansen, traveled to New York City, to sign a memorandum of understanding in the field of spinal cord injury (SCI) research, with the James J. Peters VA Medical Center (JJPVAMC), Bronx, NY. This collaboration will work specifically with VA investigators from the Rehabilitation, Research & Development (RR&D) National Center of Excellence for the Medical Consequences of Spinal Cord Injury at the JJPVAMC.

The Rick Hansen Foundation is currently celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Rick Hansen’s “Man In Motion World Tour,” whereby Hansen wheeled through 34 countries across 25,000 miles from 1985-87 to raise awareness of the potential of people with disabilities. The \$26 million raised from the Tour has since been leveraged into \$245 million via the Rick Hansen Foundation over the past quarter century.

”Partnering with world-class research facilities in order to develop collaboration around clinical trials, research and implementation of best practices is a tangible step in accelerating progress towards a cure for paralysis from spinal cord injuries,” said Rick Hansen, President and CEO of the Rick Hansen Foundation. “The American innovation we have seen today is a testament to the incredible progress being made in SCI research, and we are excited for what the future possibilities that continued U.S.-Canadian collaboration will bring.”

The Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Bronx, NY is the first U.S. facility to collaborate with the Rick Hansen Institute. The VA’s National Center of Excellence’s mission is to improve their patients’ quality of life, health and well-being and increase their longevity by identifying, intervening, and/or preventing the secondary medical consequences that result from having a spinal cord injury.

“This is a truly exciting opportunity to meet Rick and to begin a productive collaboration between our Department of Veterans Affairs National Center of Excellence and the Rick Hansen Foundation and Institute,” said William A. Bauman, MD, Director, RR&D Center for the Medical Consequences of Spinal Cord Injury. “I anticipate this partnership to generate an ongoing, concerted effort to share our mutual resources, to advance our understanding, and to improve the lives of persons with spinal cord injury in the United States and Canada.”

After the signing of the memorandum of understanding on Tuesday, Hansen was given a demonstration of innovative therapeutic and physical training solution, the *ReWalk*[™] device, an exoskeletal system, which enables a person with complete motor paraplegia to stand, walk or ascend/descend stairs by wearing the device over their legs. It is operated via a small backpack. The demonstration was given by Lieutenant Ian James Brown, a U.S. Air Force Veteran with a Computer Science and Electrical Engineering Degree from the U.S. Air Force Academy, who was injured in the line of duty in 2002.

“This has been an unprecedented endeavor and I am extremely fortunate to be able to pay-forward a ‘thank you’ to all those who sacrificed their time and effort in medical research prior to my line-of-duty injury in the Air Force,” said Lieutenant Ian James Brown, retired

U.S. Air Force Veteran. “The ReWalk represents the tip of the technological spear and is one of the most significant mobility aides since the invention of the wheelchair.”

For more information related to this story or the James J. Peters VA Medical Center, please contact Jim Connell, Director of Community and Government Relations, at 718.584.9000, Ext. 6620.

Additional Photos:

Rick Hansen meets Air Force Veteran, Ian James Brown (seated in ReWalk device).



Rick Hansen looks on as Ian James Brown demonstrates the ReWalk



The James J. Peters VA ReWalk Team with Rick Hansen (Back row, 1 – r, Shevana Swaby, Dr. William A. Bauman, Ann M. Spungen, Drew Fineberg, Pierre Asselin; front row Rick Hansen and Lt. Ian James Brown)