

National Police Defense Foundation

21 Kilmer Drive, Building 2, Suite F, Morganville, New Jersey 07751

Press Release

July 31, 2010

Dateline: Morganville, NJ

Subject: NPDF teams up with Drager Inc. to provides lifesaving aid for paralyzed cop

Comments: The National Police Defense Foundation has teamed up with Drager Respiratory Care Systems, Inc., makers of police breathalyzer machines, to provide lifesaving breathing equipment in the form of a ventilator, to an Ecuadorian Police Lieutenant who was shot and paralyzed in the line of duty. Lt. Sammy Vinueza has been a quadriplegic since being shot and set on fire in 2000 while assigned to the protective detail of the Minister of Justice. His assailants, who were never apprehended, stole the officer's firearm and radio as they fled, leaving him to die.

Incredibly, he survived but was relegated to a dilapidated wheel chair and a three hundred dollar per month pension out of which he had to pay for his own medical care. Desperate, depressed, impoverished and with little hope for a quality life, Lt. Vinueza contacted the National Police Defense Foundation and asked for a new wheel chair. Through the intercession of Executive Director Joseph Occhipinti and others, the NPDF was able to get a brand new, motorized wheelchair painted in NYPD blue donated by Sunshine Medical of California. Their incredible generosity allowed Sammy to have a degree of independence in mobility. However, life isn't easy for a paraplegic. Some months ago, Sammy lost the ability to breathe on his own due to his paralysis. A desperate search was begun for a portable ventilator in his country but, due to their socialized medical system, there were few and those that did exist, were quite dated. None existed that were portable which meant Sammy could never leave his hospital bed and his quality of life in his motorized wheelchair was a thing of the past.

Enter Ed Coombs, Director of Marketing for Drager Respiratory Care Systems of North America. Sergeant Mike Barry, the NPDF's Project Coordinator, sought a meeting with Ed Coombs who immediately sought to find equipment suitable for this paralyzed hero. The NPDF asked for a discount on this very expensive equipment but Ed Coombs would not hear a word of it. This internationally renowned safety equipment company DONATED a \$25,000 ventilator and support system.

Shortly thereafter, Joe Lewarski of Invacare Corporation in Elyria, Ohio offered to help by donating three months worth of catheters and other medical equipment for the paralyzed policeman. Their generosity is the hallmark of what they do as corporations...save human life; and the National Police Defense Foundation is eternally grateful to Drager Respiratory Care Systems and Invacare for their invaluable assistance and generosity.

Joseph Occhipinti will be flying to Ecuador on August 9th to deliver this life saving medical equipment to Lt. Vinueza. The NPDF would like to thank all who assisted in this endeavor especially Ed Coombs or Drager and Joe Lewarski of Invacare for their assistance. They are true American heroes.

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