

YASHWANTRAO CHAVAN SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD 2019, INDIA

CITATION

Mr William F. Austin

The Yashwantrao Chavan Pratisthan, Mumbai India confers Yashwantrao Chavan Special Recognition Award for year 2019 to Mr. William F. Austin. Bill Austin, as most know him - is the founder, principal owner, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Starkey Hearing Technologies. Bill Austin touches lives and makes the world a better place.

In 1961, to help pay for college and with the goal of attending medical school to become a missionary doctor, Bill started in the hearing aid industry making ear pieces in his uncle's shop. His role quickly expanded, and he began designing hearing aids as well. One day, Bill worked tirelessly to fashion a hearing aid for a patient with profound difficulties who others had given up on. The joy in the man's eyes when he could finally hear better set Bill on his life's mission - to help the world hear. Bill then realized that through this industry, he could impact and help more lives than by working alone as a missionary doctor, and that his life would have a greater value. So, Bill started his own company in the 1960s. In 1970, Bill Austin purchased a three-employee company for \$13,000 called Starkey Laboratories, which was making ear moulds for Bill's business. Bill then folded his larger operation under the Starkey name, and the rest is history.

More than 50 years later, Starkey Hearing Technologies continues to set itself apart in the industry through its quality, service and innovative hearing aids. Starkey has always stayed ahead of the times with its cutting-edge technology. Now in his sixth decade in the industry, Bill is at his happiest when personally providing and assisting people with hearing aids.

Bill Austin's generosity and steadfast belief that the gift of hearing can change the world led him to found Starkey Hearing Foundation, a charity that gives free hearing aids to those in need around the world. Bill and his wife, Tani Austin, are the biggest volunteers, traveling with the Foundation on dozens of hearing missions every year. Alongside audiologists, hearing professionals and other volunteers, Bill has helped the poor on missions in more than 100 countries and on every continent except Antarctica, often devoting the majority of his year to the Foundation's efforts and mission trips.

This passion has also touched India in fifty cities and about one hundred thousand Indian beneficiaries are now experiencing the joy of hearing. In 2018, Starkey India, created a Himalayan record, as recognized by Guinness World Records, for fitting 4,840 patients with hearing aids in the clocked time of eight hours in Balewadi, Pune, many being children from deaf schools.

Starkey Hearing Foundation employs people full-time in more than 60 countries to provide support and other services to those the Foundation serves. This empowers people in underprivileged countries to know that they too can make a difference. Starkey Institute trains local people in Africa to become audiologists.

In addition to the young children in third-world countries he has witnessed hear for the first time, Bill has personally assisted five U.S. Presidents, two Popes, Mother Teresa, and Nelson Mandela with Starkey hearing aids, to name a few. However, no matter a person's reputation or financial means, Bill treats every person with the same respect and kindness

Mr. Bill's idol is Albert Schweitzer. His philosophy, 'so the world may hear', transcends the concept of the hearing aid. His focus on reaching the unreached is not limited to hearing impaired individuals. He has lived his motto, "Alone we can't do much. Together we can change the world."

For his philanthropic efforts and volunteering, he has been awarded the Albert Schweitzer Leadership Award, Mexico's Aztec Eagle Award, the Jefferson Award, the National Caring Award, and the AG Bell Lifetime Achievement Award, to name a few. The United Nations even named him the first Goodwill Global Ambassador for Ear and Hearing Health.

This citation is awarded by Yashwantrao Chavan Pratishthan, Mumbai in recognition of the outstanding endeavour of Mr. Bill Austin and his team to give the gift of hearing to those who are deprived of it.



Sharad Pawar
President

Yashwantrao Chavan Pratisthan,
Mumbai, India.



S. G. Kale
Secretary

Yashwantrao Chavan Pratisthan,
Mumbai, India.

Mumbai
12th March, 2019