

## BIRD Foundation Newsletter

### April 2013



**Dr. Eitan Yudilevich**  
**Executive Director**

#### April 2013

President Obama's recent visit to Israel was one of great importance. The itinerary was prepared with careful attention to detail and based on initial media reports and immediate results, judged to be a great success.

One of the highlights of the visit was the Israeli technology presentation at the Israel Museum, thoughtfully scheduled immediately following the President's visit to the impressive Shrine of the Book, home to the famous Dead Sea Scrolls.

The technology innovations were carefully selected by a special committee and included products in areas such as renewable energy, medical devices and neurotechnology. One of the criteria for selection was that the product be a result of research and development from an Israeli university. Another criterion was that the development effort involve U.S.-Israel collaboration.

We are very proud that the ReWalk, a product developed by the Israeli company Argo, and whose clinical trials in the U.S. were supported by the BIRD Foundation, was included among this outstanding group of products.

The ReWalk is a medical device that enables people with lower limb walking impairments derived from spinal cord injury, brain injury, stroke and other severe walking impairments to free themselves from permanent confinement to wheelchairs and carry out routine ambulatory functions such as standing, walking and climbing stairs. This collaboration between Argo and the U.S. company Allied Orthotics and Prosthetics from New Jersey, was approved at the December 2008 BIRD Board of Governors meeting. The objective of the project was to undergo clinical trials at a U.S. rehabilitation center towards FDA approval and full commercialization. The chosen center was MossRehab In Philadelphia, PA.

President Obama was very impressed with the technology display and paid great attention to the presentations. The President is seen in a photo hugging Ms. Theresa Hannigan, a former U.S. sergeant from Long Island, who demonstrated the ReWalk at the presentation. In his memorable speech at the Binyanei Hauma in Jerusalem, on March 21, 2013, the President praised Israeli capabilities:

*"...Israelis understand the power of invention, and your universities educate engineers and inventors. That spirit has led to economic growth and human progress: solar power and electric cars; bandages and prosthetic limbs that save lives; stem cell research and new drugs that treat disease; cell phones and computer technology that change the way we live...."*

And he highlighted U.S.-Israeli collaboration:

*"...That innovation is just as important to the relationship between the United States and Israel as our security cooperation...."*

*"... More importantly, that partnership is creating new products and medical treatments, and pushing new frontiers of science and exploration."*

**BIRD's mission is in line with these statements, both in spirit and in practice.**

We at BIRD will continue to support joint projects of this kind, seeking new horizons of innovation that contribute to the economies and people of both countries and will ultimately benefit society as a whole.

Eitan Yudilevich, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

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## Latest Investments

### **BIRD Foundation to invest \$9 million in ten new projects**

[December 31, 2012](#)

The approved projects involve innovations in the areas of medical devices, communications, electronics, cyber security, healthcare IT, and water technologies.

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### **“BIRD Energy” announces \$3.5 Million in Cooperative Clean Energy Projects**

[November 25, 2012](#)

Each of the cooperative projects includes a U.S. and Israeli partner and addresses energy challenges and opportunities of interest to both countries, while focusing on commercializing clean energy technologies that improve our economic competitiveness, create jobs, and support innovative companies. The selected projects will leverage private sector cost-share for a total project value of above \$10 million.

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## Spotlight on BIRD Projects

### **BIRD Paves the Way for a New Way to Play: Hasbro - Vivo Text Project**



Traditional toys and games were simple – mostly made of plastic, no electronics and with the consumer (children) using their imaginations to play. Today's customers are no longer satisfied with traditional toys. Toys and games now require complex development using multiple CPUs motors and wireless communications. Today's consumers expect hours of interactive content. Lower margins and a limited development budget created a challenge for well-known toy-maker, Hasbro.

Hasbro became intrigued with the technology developed by a small Israeli startup, Vivo Text, who was looking for a commercial application for their text-to-speech and content distribution technologies. Since Hasbro had a need for a low-cost, efficient and on-demand method for delivering fresh new content to their products, the two companies began to discuss how they might work together to integrate Vivo Text's technology into Hasbro's next generation toys and games .

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## SMS (Medical Semantic Simulations) and SiTEL Collaboration

SiTEL joined forces with SMS on a BIRD funded project to develop a unique platform to author medical training simulations that will be operated by free language commands. The trainee will manage a virtual team of medical professionals that must cope with real-life medical nightmares.

When a person steps on a plane, the risk of dying in a plane crash is one in 10 million. When a person is admitted to a hospital, the risk of dying or being seriously harmed by medical error is one in 300. The SiTEL-SMS joint venture wishes to contribute to change these odds.



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## BIRD Upcoming Events

### U.S. - Israel Neurotechnology Business Exchange to Showcase Israeli Brain Technologies

On May 6-7, 2013, fifteen Israeli companies will travel to Charleston, South Carolina to meet with major U.S. stakeholders in Neurotechnology to explore business and research relationships.

The event is being organized by the Medical Committee and the South Carolina-Israel Collaboration of the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Region, the Israel Economic Mission in NY, the BIRD Foundation and Israel Brain Technologies. The United States remains one of the major hubs for innovation, development, and commercialization of new products for the diagnosis and treatment of brain disorders. The Israeli companies working in this field understand that their presence in the US is critical because of US innovation and proven track record in fields such as computer science, nanotechnology and brain research.

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### Accelerating U.S. - Israel Cyber Security Collaborations May 27- May 30, 2013 - Washington D.C/ Maryland/ Virginia

A delegation of Israeli cyber security companies will come together with major U.S. industry stakeholders to explore business opportunities and collaborations.

The visit offers a focused opportunity for the companies to present their technologies and have pre-arranged meetings with leading integrators, partners and investors with the goal of fostering joint venture R&D, investment, and marketing alliances. The visit is organized by the BIRD Foundation and the Commercial Mission Office of the Embassy of Israel to Washington D.C. in cooperation with the Maryland-Israel Development Center, and Fairfax County Economic Development Authority

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