

Homeless Youth Ministry Invents Toys Sold at Radio Shack, Target

✖ A toy helicopter powered by technology invented by residents at a Los Angeles homeless youth ministry is being sold in more than 7,000 Radio Shack stores nationwide.

“Shadow” operates using a Virtual Reality Controller (VRC) created by Hope for Homeless Youth. Instead of functioning like a traditional joystick, the VRC simulates the motion of an aircraft’s control column.

(Photo: Teddy Campos, a member of Hope for Homeless Youth’s Inventor’s Club, flies the Shadow helicopter.)

“The technology represents a quantum leap in the way [radio-controlled] toys are controlled,” said the Rev. Clayton Golliher, founder of Hope for Homeless Youth. “It’s called the Virtual Reality Controller because it puts the user in a driver’s seat of a car or in the cockpit of a futuristic airplane.”

(Watch demonstration of Shadow helicopter.)

A licensing agreement between the ministry’s Inventor’s Club and Interactive Toy Concepts (ITC) allows the Toronto-based company to use the VRC to power a new line of remote-controlled toys. In early 2010 ITC will release the F-22 Jet Rapture. The Shadow helicopter is also available at .

Royalties from the \$ toy will benefit Technology From Heaven, a nonprofit trust that funds the homeless shelter and the Inventor’s Club. Youth who contributed to the invention will also receive a portion of the proceeds.

ITC has purchased 11 of the club’s inventions.

"Together, the Inventor's Club and Interactive Toy Concepts are about to revolutionize the radio-control toy category with the VRC line," ITC President Michael Mathieu said in a statement. "Knowing that the royalty payments they will receive will go into the pockets of those who most need it is a reward that is rarely found in this world."

A former Youth With a Mission (YWAM) missionary, Golliher moved to Los Angeles nearly 30 years ago and began ministering on the streets. He saw youth involved in prostitution, addicted to drugs and on the verge of committing suicide. "I didn't see any of the church out helping these kids," Golliher said. "And God just broke my heart."

Today, Hope for Homeless Youth operates a 40-bed emergency shelter and leads a one-year discipleship program. Although it is a separate organization, the ministry has offices at the Los Angeles Dream Center, led by Matthew Barnett.

It also operates five facilities, including a 40-acre ranch in Colorado, a transitional house in California and a 5,000-square-foot ministry center in South Central Los Angeles that reaches gang members.

Golliher, a former pig and peach farmer from Colorado, has no engineering experience, though the Inventor's Club has developed 260 household products and 64 toys. He says the inventions are "downloaded" from heaven when the group prays together, sometimes for two or three hours at a time.

"We come together and we just pray in the Spirit," said Golliher, who is married with four children. "[God] gives some people visions. Or He gives us words. Or some people see mental pictures and these are incredible inventions that God gives us. That's how we get our inventions."

"It's the foolish things to confound the wise," he added. "The Lord perfects His strength in our weakness. And then He gets the glory."

ITC marketing director Ian Chisholm said his company has been impressed with Golliher's youth. "The way we look at it, we need to touch on any kind of creative mind that we can," Chisholm said. "The people [Golliher] works with, some of them are incredibly talented. And they just need the resources to bring it out. So what we find on the one level is by supporting his group by donations, it's great that he keeps us first in line when he comes up with something."

Golliher said that in addition to helping homeless youth develop marketable skills, the Inventor's Club is giving youth hope. He believes many of the nation's brightest minds belong to young men and women living on the streets.

"It's really given these kids a new sense of purpose and a love for the Lord and just a relationship of hearing His voice and beginning to put their work to their hands," he said.

Teddy Campos will attest to that. He stole his first auto at age 13 and spent time in jails each year for 11 consecutive years. But he later entered Hope for Homeless Youth's one-year discipleship program and remained clean and sober for seven months, which he attributes to his involvement in the Inventor's Club.

"It's given me a purpose and reason to stay clean," Campos said. "I've always wanted to work at something I really liked and working on inventions has given me an inner peace. It's given me an outlet to do what I do best."

Stefan Pelletier went through the program in 2003 but relapsed. He re-enrolled and has been drug free for a year. "It's a special feeling to know that our work helps hold us all together here," he said. "I love being a part of this and it keeps my mind off a lot of wrong desires."

Now the Inventor's Clubs does consulting work, helping other Christians develop their creative ideas. Golliher said the effort has become a major source of financing for the

ministry.

“We feel like the Lord wants to show off through His people,” Golliher said, “if we’ll give Him the glory and help build His kingdom.”