

## **PARO Robots Announces Launch of Sales and Delivery in the U.S.**

CHICAGO, Nov. 4 /PRNewswire/ -- PARO Robots U.S. Inc. and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) have announced that order fulfillment and delivery of the therapeutic robot PARO will begin in the United States on December 1, 2009, from its sales and distribution office in Itasca, Illinois. The company will take orders from individuals and institutions by phone, fax, and email beginning November 16, 2009.

This follows receipt of Class II exempt pre-marketing notification from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on September 21, 2009. During the course of pre-marketing with the FDA, the sales office loaned twenty of the PARO robots, designed as a baby harp seal, to hospitals and healthcare organizations with elderly residents, people with disabilities, and dementia patients, as well as schools for autistic children. Examples of positive comments from users include:

- "PARO has provided sensory, cognitive and social stimulation. PARO generates conversation and is used in place of pet visitation." Easter Seals, Silver Spring, MD
  
- "Our Alzheimer's residents were especially excited about their new friend. The greatest result we have seen with PARO in this unit is the joy it has brought." Beaufont Towers, Richmond VA

PARO is scheduled to be on display at the 2009 American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA) Annual meeting from November 9-11 in Chicago. During the exposition, PARO will reside in the "AAHSA House" as one of the products that improve the quality of life for the aging. PARO will also be exhibited at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, January 7-10, 2010.

The PARO robot is covered in pure white synthetic fur with built-in intelligence providing psychological, physiological, and social effects through physical interaction with humans. Inside are two 32-bit CPUs, which can process voice recognition and imitate animal behavior, enabling PARO to develop its own character. PARO has five different types of sensors over the body that allows it to perceive people and the environment, and respond to touch, light, sound, temperature, and posture.

Photos, videos, reviews, and additional background information are available at [www.parorobots.com](http://www.parorobots.com).

PARO has been in use in Japan and throughout Europe since 2003, and was introduced to the U.S. in November 2008 with the assistance of JETRO Chicago. The inventor of PARO is Takanori Shibata, PhD, Senior Research Scientist of Japan's National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), who has been at the forefront of service robotics for over 15 years.

More than 1,300 PAROs have been sold in Japan since 2005. 70% have been sold to individual users as substitutes for animal pets, and 20% have been sold to nursing homes, schools, and elderly institutions. In Denmark, more than 100 PAROs have been sold, primarily to the health care system, with another 900 scheduled for delivery by 2011. In the U.S., PARO has been in trial use at several hospitals and institutions across the country. Recently, the Vincentian Collaborative System, a Catholic healthcare and human services

organization in Pittsburgh, has been utilizing PARO on a trial basis in four of its nursing homes, with plans to purchase seven at year's end, aided by a philanthropic grant.

The price of PARO is \$6,000, including a one-year service warranty from the company's Itasca, Illinois warehouse. The sales office has a short term rental program for trial available for limited quantities.

### ***About PARO Robots U.S., Inc.***

Headquartered in Itasca, Illinois, PARO Robots U.S., Inc. was founded by Sugino Machine Ltd., Japan and Intelligent Systems Co. Ltd., Japan; and serves as U.S. sales and distribution center for PARO products. For more information, please visit [www.parorobots.com](http://www.parorobots.com). Contact: Christine Hsu, General Manager, at 866-980-PARO, 630-467-1044, or [info@parorobots.us](mailto:info@parorobots.us).

### ***About JETRO***

JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) is a government-related organization promoting mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small to medium size Japanese firms maximize their global export potential. For more information, please visit [www.jetro.org](http://www.jetro.org). Contact: Kevin Kalb at 312-832-6023, or [kevin\\_kalb@jetro.go.jp](mailto:kevin_kalb@jetro.go.jp).

SOURCE JETRO Chicago

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