



Nina Foundation promotes and works towards an inclusive society and is very proud of such role models and honors them. It truly recognises people with spinal injuries, appreciates and salutes these heroes who have worked extremely hard to reach their destinations and converted their dreams into reality, besides raising the bar of achievement higher for not only themselves but for society as a whole. India is blessed with bounties of nature, its diversity and people with different belief systems. However, our awardees are chosen without bias, i.e. irrespective of geographic, religious, linguistic or ethnic differences. Diversity and inclusion concerns each of us as we go into the sunset of our lives, as anyone can be affected by significant impairment or disability through stress or mental sickness. Nina Foundation promotes and works towards an inclusive society.

Being strongly committed to its mission of rehabilitation of people with spinal cord injury, Nina Foundation instituted the **ROCKSTAR AWARD** in 2009 to recognise that individual who has, with exemplary courage, faced and won battles in life, in spite of having spinal cord injury. By presenting this Rockstar Award, **Nina Foundation** “renews the spirit of life”. It is proud **that this achiever also encourages others to reach the top in whatever vocations they choose.**

Jo व्यक्ति aayushyaat aapley dukh kivhma kashta visroon ek dhaadasiney aapla ek oonchyaatlaa oonch mukaamaawar pohochto tyaalaaach, hey puraskaar dile jaate.

Who is this individual who infinitely inspires us, we can and do look up to? *Iss saal kaun hai yeh shaks jo hamey itnee sphoortee detaa hai?*

Our ROCKSTAR AWARDEE for the year 2013 is Mr. Kiran Jani of Ambaji, Gujarat.... Amaara aatmabal nu jeevit pushp.

Being the only son amongst three daughters, who are now all married, Kiran Jani was naturally treated as a special child. Born on December 3, 1963 in Matoda village near Ahmedabad, he was very mischievous and his share of naughtiness was always putting someone else in trouble. He did a technical course in audio and TV Repairs after passing his HSC in 1982 and, thereafter, an apprenticeship in Mumbai. He returned to Ambaji and changed his line of work, and along with his father started a business of selling marble temples. As a normal youngster, he lived life ‘king-size’ and well, enjoyed all that life offered him and more. His hobbies included dancing, music especially old songs of Mohd. Rafi, Kishore and Mukesh, trekking, riding scooters. In fact, he loved the outdoors. Standing tall at a bounteous height of 6 feet 2 inches, he felt tall too as he definitely caught people’s eye!

Tragedy struck on 25th, July 1988 when he climbed atop to repair a leakage in the roof of his shop which caved in and he thudded to the floor right on his back. Immense pain and lack of feeling waist below followed. Soon after which his family and friends immediately took him to the nearest hospital in Ambaji. Due to lack of facilities, he was rushed to Ahmedabad Civil Hospital where a CT scan confirmed his worst fears- that of spinal cord injury at L1, L2 level.

Operation for this spinal injury a week later brought him to Bhatia Hospital, at Tardeo, Mumbai where Dr. K.V. Chaubal performed surgery and also worked on him emotionally and mentally by offering him immense hope that he would be able to move his legs with sustained physiotherapy. This training involved basic daily movement, viz., how to sit and move the body with the help of calipers and walkers. He was disappointed that even after four months of physio training, he was still dependent on others. After spending two years’ of brooding, self-pity and helplessness, realisation dawned that he must channel his energies into leading a useful and productive life. And, so worked harder to become independent.

This ambition and innate, burning desire laced with hope and determination brought him back to Mumbai. After 3 months of physical training under the guidance of Dr. Ali Irani and Dr. Sangeeta Nair, physiotherapist at Nanavati Hospital, he felt confident that he was definitely going to make it, see light at the end of this dark tunnel. Tireless Dr. Sangeeta Nair played an important role in giving him moral support to maximize the potential of his capabilities and gave him a daily rigorous training of five hours.

His caring wife and homemaker, Meena, was always beside him through thick and thin. Truly, she is another documented and exemplary proof of the dictum “behind every successful man there is a woman.” For, only a year into their marriage and an infant of 3 months, she continued to be there through all his needs. He feels that had it not been for, both Meena, his wife-cum-best friend, and his mother, he would not have successfully reached his destination. Last year, Meena and Kiran celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary that included their daughter, Mayuri. He is proud that Mayuri has completed her MBA and now is happily married to Yash Joshi. His support system includes his family and friends who increased his confidence to handle every activity of his daily routine independently. Today, he has his own hand-operated four-wheeler that allows him travel to various places independently.

On the socio-religious side, along with his parents he continues the family tradition of actively supporting the management of the Seth Nanalal Macharaam Dharamshaalaa in Ambaji, a *tirthasthal* and tourist centre that attracts devotees from all over the world, which include physically challenged people, too. He strongly felt that arrangements made must enable SCI-s to get a proper darshan in the sanctorum of the Mandir. He discussed this matter with the Managing Trustees of the Mandir and the needful was done. Today, as they have installed ramps Ambaji is wheelchair-friendly and accessible to all. May Amba Mata's Divine Grace and Blessings always be with you and your family!

Inspired and guided by Padmashri Kanubhai Taylor who runs the Disable Welfare Trust, Surat, he is also active in causes of SCI-s and the community. He has attended seminars in Surat and Ahmedabad organized by Govt. of Gujarat. Well-known Major Ahluwalia who leads ISC, New Delhi has impressed upon him the need for education, empowerment and vigilance of the government role in the near future for uplifting the masses of physically-challenged and visually-impaired. Yoga *sadhana* has helped him boost his morale and strengthen his mind.

However, he adds that in spite of having met challenges in his life, be it physical and mental, that he has a secure future for himself and is enjoying an active social life, deep down he feels that a life of the SCI is not as normal as one would like it to be. And much needs to be done. We, at [Nina Foundation](#), have heartily promised him that we will persist for this cause till we succeed!

We wish Kiranbhai that all his tomorrows be wholesomely beautiful. *Ahmay praarthanaa kariye chey ke tamhaaru bhavishya aarogyapoorak aney anandmayi ho!*

Trustee Dhaval Mehta read the citation being awarded to Mr. Kiran Jani. Kreate Advertising team created a beautiful film that reflected the persona of Mr. Kiran Jani and designed the coveted Rockstar Trophy. Shri Madhu Narang, Managing Director of Better Services crafted and sponsored the beautiful Rockstar Trophy that was awarded to him by honoured Chief Guest of the evening, Shrimati Rajashri-ji Birla along with the citation and gift goodie-bag. Pictures galore followed.

There was a popper gun that burst out tinsel to mark this celebration after which, Kiranbhai gave his acceptance speech. His family was invited on the podium to share his joy, too! Photo sessions captured all these precious moments!

Three cheers for our  **5th**  **ROCKSTAR**, Kiran Jani,

HIP HIP HURRAY!  **HIP HIP HURRAY!**  **HIP HIP HURRAY!** 