



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Knit-Rite Celebrates 90 Years

KANSAS CITY, KS –: Knit-Rite, Inc., a Kansas City based manufacturer of medical textiles, is celebrating 90 years.

Founded in 1923 by an amputee prosthetist, Knit-Rite has a long history of innovation and providing superior products to the prosthetic and orthotic profession.

Captain William E. Isle, or Billy Isle, knew about serving amputees from managing the Kansas City branch of J.F. Rowley Co. beginning in 1906 and being an amputee himself. He was a skilled craftsman, a strong leader, and an inspiration to amputees. He spent many years serving the allied effort during WWI, planning and managing new amputee facilities in France, Britain, England, Scotland, Italy and Russia. Upon returning to America, he started a plant for Rowley in New York and opened an amputee facility for J.E. Hanger Co. in Toronto, Canada. In 1920 he joined his family back in Kansas City and bought the Rowley company, changing the name to the W.E. Isle Co.

In 1923, Isle decided that the company needed to provide a better “stump sock” to patients, and purchased a knitting machine. Word traveled quickly about the high quality prosthetic socks and the Knit-Rite Company was born.

One of Isle’s favorite patients was a young man named Ted Smith, who had lost his leg in a boyhood accident. Smith’s quick wit and interest in people stood out, and Isle asked him to join the business to help represent Knit-Rite across the country. Eventually Smith became a certified orthotist and a partner in Knit-Rite.

Through building relationships with practitioners and other industry manufacturers Smith helped Knit-Rite become a household name, as a leading textile manufacturer and full line distributor, in O&P facilities around the country. The company became a mainstay in the Orthopedic and Artificial Limb Manufacturers Association, and Isle also helped to start the American Board of Certification in Orthotics and Prosthetics.

In 1968, Ted Smith, C.O. became President of Knit-Rite. His son Bill Smith, C.O. succeeded him as president in 1973 and eventually became Knit-Rite’s sole owner. Bill was active in the company and the industry for over 40 years. He was committed to supporting the industry, serving as an ABC examiner, and for several years with the American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association, serving as AOPA president in 1986.

At Knit-Rite, Bill focused on improving the lives of O&P patients, leading numerous innovations in prosthetic and orthotic textile interface products, and in better serving O&P facilities through expanding manufacturer relationships and products offered. Those goals remain a central focus for Knit-Rite today.

Smith retired and sold the company in 1992, but in 2006, the third generation Smith family, including brothers Mark Smith C.P. and Ted Smith, re-acquired Knit-Rite with partners Ron Hercules and Chris Vering, a group reflecting decades of experience both with the company and serving in the O&P professional associations.

Today Knit-Rite’s is the world’s leading developer and manufacturer of innovative prosthetic and orthotic textile products with a diverse product offering of thousands of products. Through ongoing in-house product developments and acquisition of the Therafirm division in the year 2000, Knit-Rite’s textile manufacturing expertise has expanded to include products for foot care, vascular support, acute and long-term care, orthopedics, industrial safety, sports medicine, podiatry, pedorthics, and consumer markets.



SmartKnit.

core-spun
by THERAFIRM

THERAFIRM®

GOGO
THERAFIRM

SmartKnitKIDS®

Through a commitment to patients' needs and a dedicated focus on textile research, Knit-Rite continues to innovate, develop, and provide a complete selection of high quality and effective products.

With a strong foundation and heritage dating back to 1923, Knit-Rite will continue providing superior products, service, and the highest level of responsiveness for facilities to in turn provide patients with the best care possible.

Knit-Rite, Inc. is a leading designer, marketer, and manufacturer of innovative textiles for medical and consumer markets. For 90 years we have manufactured medical textile solutions that promote mobility, protection, and comfort. We remain committed to the continued research and development and manufacturing products with healthy benefits for a better quality of life.

###

Press Contact:

Kam Howard, EVP Marketing

Knit-Rite Inc.

E-mail: khoward@knitrite.com

913.279.6345 • 1.800.821.3094 ext. 6345