



Assembly design of the ProRise seat assist.



## Leveraging the Idea

*An active lifestyle lead baby-boomer and industrial designer Robson Splane to a number of injuries and surgeries as his body aged. As Robson tells it, "The irony was that after scaling vertical rock faces of 1000 feet, I couldn't get out of a chair."*

After hip surgery he purchased a seat assist product that had been on the market for decades and found its limitations disappointing. Having designed hundreds of medical rehab and fitness products he decided he'd build his own seat assist using Ashlar-Vellum Graphite™ and Xenon™ software. After more than a dozen prototypes he eventually decided that the simplest solution was the best. He tells us, "It will lift 100% of my weight without any springs or gears or pistons or motors. It just uses leverage. So the more someone weighs, the more it will lift."

Splane's team had recently changed their business model from designers-for-hire to being design-entrepreneurs with their own production and sales team, forming a new company called DreamProjX-Arise, Inc. In this process, they considered markets to address in their new venture for which they already had products and which could sustain and continue to grow in a down economy. They found that among others markets, medical rehab and assistance products fit that profile.

The Splane industrial design team decided they had something special with the ProRise seat assist, so they patented the design and prepared it for production with an eye toward aging baby boomers and wounded warriors. Opening a DBA called RiseAbility under DreamProjX umbrella, they started production of the ProRise seat assist, then the ProRise Plus for larger individuals. They filled out the product line with custom cushions, a tray, a carrying case, a ProRise for the toilet and a model that a caregiver could use with their foot to lift a patient.

The team used both Graphite and Xenon for all processes from design through manufacturing. Splane began using Graphite for 2D wire frame drawing when it was originally called Vellum, clear back in the early '90s. When Ashlar-Vellum came out with our first solid and surface modeling product, Vellum Solids (now renamed Cobalt and Xenon), in about 2000, the Splane Design team took one look and decided to "dump Solid Designer and SolidWorks." As he tells it,

« *We said, 'This is it' because it was so intuitive. It wasn't [mandatorily] history-based. It had good surfacing and better rendering at the time. We were all used to all the 2D tools. We all said, 'This is what we're going to stick with.'* »

He finds Ashlar-Vellum CAD and 3D modeling software is so easy to use that when a new designer is hired, Splane sits them down in front of Graphite or Xenon and if they've had any CAD experience at all, he tells us, "They just start working. They don't even read the manual. They just do it."

Robson Splane and his team feel, "For a lot of reasons it was the better product for us." ❖



The ProRise can be used by most anyone to lower to or stand from a seated position using only the leverage of their own body weight. It's lightweight, portable and affordable.



The ProRise fits many kinds of chairs. Attachable extension handles help when extra leverage is needed. Very little upper body strength is required.

### Background / Contact

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