

VIRGINIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION TO PRESENT AWARD TO OPERATION BLESSING INTERNATIONAL ON THURSDAY, APRIL 2

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (March 31, 2009) – The Virginia Emergency Management Association will present the Virginia Beach-based humanitarian organization Operation Blessing International (OBI) with their annual award honoring a nonprofit organization, government group or business for helping emergency management within the commonwealth of Virginia.

The award will be presented to OBI president Bill Horan and OBI's director of U.S. disaster relief, Jody Herrington at a special luncheon to be held this Thursday, April 2 at the Hampton Roads Conference Center. Virginia Emergency Management Association president Hui-Shan Walker and past president Douglas Young will present the award in front of 300 guests.

Previous recipients of award include the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active In Disaster (VOAD), and the nonprofit organization God's Pit Crew.

Doug Young, past president of the Virginia Emergency Management Association, said, "Operation Blessing International was chosen because of their years of humanitarian service and disaster relief efforts in the Commonwealth of Virginia. From floods and hurricanes to last year's devastating tornadoes in Suffolk, OBI has always been among the first on the ground when disaster strikes and usually one of the last to leave after the cleanup."

For more information about the Virginia Emergency Management Association, please visit www.vemaweb.com.

To donate, volunteer, or read updates on OBI's efforts, please log on to www.ob.org and/or www.myowneyes.org.

ABOUT OPERATION BLESSING INTERNATIONAL:

Operation Blessing International (OBI) is one of the largest charities in America, providing strategic disaster relief, medical aid, hunger relief, clean water and community development in 22 countries around the world on a daily basis. In 2008, OBI responded to 33 disasters in 16 foreign countries as well as 7 major domestic disasters. Most recently, OBI mobilized teams and funded major relief and recovery efforts in Myanmar, the Sichuan Province of China, Rift Valley in Kenya, Bangladesh, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, the Darfur region of Sudan, Pakistan, Somalia, India, Indonesia, Mozambique and the Philippines. OBI has also made headlines as a first responder to U.S. hurricanes, floods and tornadoes as well as the tsunami disaster in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand. In addition to directing major disaster relief efforts, OBI has often filled the role of logistical arm to organizations including the International Red Cross, the Salvation Army, UNICEF and the United Nations World Food Program. Founded in 1978, Operation Blessing International has touched the lives of more than 209.3 million people in more than 105 countries and 50 states, providing goods and services valued at over \$1.7 billion to date.

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