



## **OPERATION BLESSING INTL. TO OPEN MAJOR DISTRIBUTION CENTER IN GRAND PRAIRIE, TX FOR DONATED FOOD AND RELIEF SUPPLIES**

GRAND PRAIRIE, TX (June 21, 2012) – Operation Blessing International (OBI), one of the largest charities in America, will open a major distribution center for donated food and relief supplies in Grand Prairie, Texas on June 27.

This location will serve as the humanitarian organization's newest staging point for transfers of millions of pounds of donated food and relief aid from the Southeast to the Southwest and will also serve as a regional headquarters for domestic disaster relief efforts. OBI also operates major distribution centers in Chesapeake, VA, Ocala, FL and Bristol, VA.

The new Grand Prairie facility features 45,000 square-feet of storage space with nine loading docks for tractor-trailer trucks and one loading dock with a drive-up ramp. It will provide several jobs locally, including 2-3 warehousemen and a driver.

Operation Blessing International projects that, within the next several years, some 30 million pounds of food and relief aid (750 tractor-trailer truckloads) will travel through this new facility, which will impact more than 1 million people each month.

OBI's domestic hunger relief program currently delivers more than 2 million pounds of free food and supplies each week to a network of more than 120 community-based partners in dozens of cities including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, Washington DC, Tampa, Nashville, Asheville, Buffalo, and many more. The products are

then distributed by the partner organizations to roughly 4,400 local food pantries, where it is given to people in need. Since its inception, Operation Blessing International has distributed 1.3 billion pounds of food and relief aid, supplemented over 865 million meals, and transported some 35,000 truckloads that have driven over 28 million miles.

Steve O'Grady, vice president of operations and logistics for OBI, said, "Operation Blessing has identified Grand Prairie as an ideal hub for the expansion of our food distribution and disaster response programs. Given the increasing numbers of families in Texas and the surrounding states that are struggling in these tough economic times, Operation Blessing is now better positioned to meet their needs."

The Grand Prairie facility will also serve as a pre-staging location for OBI's domestic disaster relief team, which is a first-responder to dozens of major disasters each year. The facility will house supplies and equipment including a portable kitchen that can feed over 1,000 hot meals a day, enough tools and protective gear to equip 100 volunteers immediately after a disaster, a shower trailer, hundreds of cots and a large tent, an 80kW generator, and enough roofing supplies to fix 100 homes.

Jody Herrington-Gettys, director of domestic disaster relief, said, "By having our equipment centrally located in Texas, it gives us the ability to respond to disasters across the heartland of America and the West Coast within 24 hours."

#### 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 23 countries around the world on a daily basis. In 2010, OBI was awarded Charity Navigator's coveted 4 star rating for sound fiscal management for the 7th year in a row, a feat that only 2% of rated charities have ever achieved. In November 2010, Forbes named OBI as the 6<sup>th</sup> most efficient charity in America. Additionally, the Chronicle of Philanthropy currently ranks OBI as the 23rd largest charity and the 6th largest international charity. Founded in 1978, Operation Blessing International has touched the

lives of more than 235 million people in more than 105 countries and 50 states, providing goods and services valued at over \$2.7 billion to date.

For more information please log on to [www.ob.org](http://www.ob.org)

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