

## OPERATION BLESSING INTERNATIONAL RESPONDING TO LOCAL VIRGINIA TORNADOES

-Charity Asking For Local Volunteers To Help With Cleanup-

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (April 18, 2011) – Operation Blessing International, the 6<sup>th</sup> largest international charity, is responding to a devastating series of tornadoes right in its own backyard, with a disaster relief team deployed to Deltaville, Virginia.

Deltaville is a small community of roughly three thousand residents. Some 25 homes were completely destroyed by the storms, with another 40 severely damaged.

The team, led by the charity's director of U.S. disaster relief Jody Herrington-Gettys, left its Virginia Beach headquarters yesterday with a convoy including a mobile command center, a portable kitchen that can feed thousands, a utility trailer, a skid steer and other debris removal equipment. They immediately set up the portable kitchen at the Philippi Christian Church (17276 General Puller Highway) to provide free hot meals to storm victims and emergency responders last night and all day today. Also today, the OBI team is using heavy equipment to help with debris removal.

OBI will be accepting volunteers Tuesday (April 19) through Saturday (April 23) to help residents clean debris. Anyone interested in volunteering should meet at Philippi Christian Church (17276 General Puller Hwy, Deltaville) at 8:30am each day. All volunteers should wear long pants (jeans OK) with closed-toe shoes. OBI will provide lunch, tools, and management. Each day will wrap up by 4:30pm. Volunteers needing more information please phone (757) 374-0944.

Residents needing help with clean up should phone (757) 274-8650, or go to Philippi Christian Church (17276 General Puller Hwy, Deltaville) to fill out a work request form.

Bill Horan, president of OBI, said, "I just got back from Japan where OBI is serving tsunami victims and a few days later, here we are assisting fellow Virginia residents who are victims of this weekend's tornadoes. The damage in Japan is more widespread, but the pain of losing one's home is hard to put into words in any language."

### 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. OBI was awarded Charity Navigator's coveted 4 star rating for sound fiscal management for the fifth year in a row (2009), a feat that only 4% 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.

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VIDEO FOOTAGE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD:

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Path: /InBound/OB\_Incoming/Virginia Tornado Deployment

PHOTOS ARE AVAILABLE:

<https://picasaweb.google.com/photosUSDR/VirginiaTornadoDeploymentDay1#>

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