

OPERATION BLESSING INTL. DEPLOYS DISASTER RELIEF TEAM TO NEW ORLEANS

NEW ORLEANS, LA (August 30, 2012) – Operation Blessing International, one of the largest international humanitarian organizations, has deployed its domestic disaster relief team to the greater New Orleans area following Hurricane Isaac.

Under the leadership of Jody Herrington-Gettys, Director of U.S. Disaster Relief, the OBI team pre-staged staff and equipment in Hattiesburg, MS in advance of the storm. Since the beginning of the storm, Herrington-Gettys has been speaking with local and national emergency management officials in addition to its network of nearly 300 partner organizations throughout the region to determine the area of greatest need. Based on those reports, OBI set up a base of operations for equipment and volunteer housing in St. Bernard Parish last night.

Today, OBI team members will assess damage in Plaquemines Parish, the hardest hit area. They have also been asked by the State EOC to serve hot meals in St. Bernard Parish, so they will be setting up their mobile kitchen, which is capable of serving 2,000 hot meals per day. Serving meals will start at 6 pm.

The OBI team on the ground currently includes a number of staff and equipment including a mobile command center, mobile kitchen, 2 construction trailers full of supplies, tools and clean-up supplies for over 100 volunteers, 1 Skid Steer for debris removal, a supply truck full of tarps, roofing supplies, 100 cots, ready-to-eat meals and water, a shower trailer, and an 80 KW generator. A 20-foot crane and CAT 924 loader have been deployed and will arrive on the ground tomorrow. In addition to this equipment, OBI also has an 18-ton crane, skid steer and a 20 Cubic Yard Dump Truck that can be deployed from the organization's three national warehouses (Chesapeake, VA, Ocala, FL, and Grand Prairie, TX) if needed.

As part of its "Need Help/Want Help" program, Operation Blessing International will provide free volunteer labor to local residents who need assistance with the following services: blue roof tarps, debris removal, or chainsaw work. Residents can fill out work order requests either by calling 757-274-8650 or go to the ACF Outreach-Operation Blessing command center at 7451 West Saint Bernard Highway in Arabi.

OBI, which specializes in mass volunteer management, will be calling for volunteers shortly to take part in relief efforts including debris removal, roof repair, and more. OBI will also begin accepting work requests (for free) from local homeowners whose houses were damaged. Please stay tuned for more information, or log on to www.ob.org <<http://www.ob.org>> for the latest information. Anyone interested in volunteering can call 757-374-0944.

Operation Blessing Intl. is very familiar with New Orleans, having spent some two-and-a-half-years in the city following Hurricane Katrina. The charity, which was a first responder to that storm, provided a \$60 million relief effort that included 265,000 hours of volunteer service, running a free medical and dental clinic and pharmacy that served over 30,000 people with free doctor care and free prescriptions, saving the city from a mosquito-borne disease outbreak by treating thousands of stagnant swimming pools with

mosquito-eating fish, preparing over 1 million free meals to emergency responders and volunteers, donating an entire fleet of busses to St. Bernard Parish for transportation of relief workers and volunteers, and providing roughly \$5 million in cash grants to local nonprofit organizations' relief efforts. For their efforts, OBI has received many accolades from the city, state, and federal governments.

“We’re sorry to see our friends in New Orleans go through a hurricane again,” said Herrington-Gettys. “There is a lot of heartbreak that this is really happening again. A lot of the people whose homes are full of water are the same people who just rebuilt their homes from Katrina.”

About Operation Blessing International

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 7th year in a row (2011), a feat that only 2% of rated charities have ever achieved. In November 2010, Forbes named OBI as the 6th 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.

###

CONTACT:

Eddie Ward

Roslan & Campion Public Relations

(212) 966-4600

eddie@rc-pr.com

cell: 917-864-6446