



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Friends of the Orphans Volunteer and Virginia Mason Medical Team Provide Orthopedic Expertise to Victims of Haiti Earthquake

*Team to arrive in Haiti with plane load of medical supplies
for use at St. Damien's Hospital led by Fr. Rick Frechette*

SEATTLE, Wash.— January 28, 2010— As the widespread devastation of the Haitian earthquake became quickly apparent, Virginia Mason orthopedic surgeon and Friends of the Orphans volunteer Tom Green knew he had to help.

Relaying a message to his friend Fr. Rick Frechette, Director of St. Damien's Hospital in Tabarre and the Caribbean Director of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos International (NPH), which Friends of the Orphans supports, Frechette's reply was swift: "Bring a sleeping bag, bar of soap and towel and get here as fast as you can."

With that, Green, who has been at Virginia Mason Hospital in Seattle since 1975, put together a team including Dr. Lyle Sorenson, physician assistant Derek Gallichotte and Merry O'Barr, RN, and began organizing the journey. The team departs from Seattle tonight and thanks to extensive medical supply donations from Virginia Mason and the community, and a transport plane donated by a local business, the four-person team and full load of supplies will arrive in Port-au-Prince this weekend. Dr. Green plans to stay for at least one month.

Nanci Green, who along with her husband and a couple others, was a founder of the Friends of the Orphans Northwest office in 1988, and has high hopes for what the team can accomplish there in supporting NPH and the work of Fr. Rick.

As a Friends of the Orphans volunteer in Haiti several times before the earthquake and knowing conditions today, she said, "The need in Haiti is now beyond crucial, and the orthopedic skills the team has will make a big impact in alleviating the terrible suffering going on. Plus, because of my husband's general training and the skills of the rest of the team, they can help in other areas as well."

One key aspect of their trip is that many of the expensive and critical machines to assist surgery teams with things like skin grafts, cauterizing wounds and orthopedic aids will be donated to St. Damien's Hospital permanently, so that Fr. Rick and his team can use them to treat future patients. Other supplies they will take down include crutches, amputation kits, wheelchairs, electric drills, plates and screws and a variety of medicine and painkillers.

Green said, "Friends of the Orphans and NPH have had an established presence in Haiti for more than 20 years with their St. Helene orphanage, St. Damien's Hospital and all of the community outreach programs, and so we didn't waste any time in offering our help. We are a part of that community."

She added that while the earthquake was devastating, much-needed attention to the country has dramatically increased and monetary donations are still more critical than ever. "Friends of the Orphans and Fr. Rick know exactly where to allocate all donations and not a penny is wasted," she said. "No one is discounted in getting assistance, and they are treated with respect. This is one organization where donors can really see where their money is going."

All donations made to Friends of the Orphans will be directly applied to immediate needs such as first aid supplies and medicine, food and water, shipping of necessary materials to assist in efforts, treating the injured and the establishment of programs to help the most vulnerable.

Please visit www.friendsoftheorphans.org, or call 888-201-8880 to make a donation in response to this tragedy.

BACKGROUND:

Chicago-based Friends of the Orphans, a U.S. fundraising arm, and Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos International (NPH) transform the lives of orphaned, abandoned and disadvantaged children in Latin American and the Caribbean, including Haiti. Our presence in Haiti includes our orphanage with 350 children, various community and education programs and the establishment of the country's only free pediatric hospital. NPH's hospital programs also help adults in need and last year, staff and volunteers treated more than 30,000 children and adults.

Friends of the Orphans, a 40-year-old nonprofit, has six regional offices in the United States that support a network of NPH homes and their outreach programs in nine Latin American and Caribbean countries. Since its founding in 1954, NPH has assisted nearly 16,000 children and currently cares for more than 3,300 in Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru. For more information about Friends of the Orphans, please visit www.friendsoftheorphans.org.

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