

**Forward Edge
International**

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Truckloads of provisions, volunteers headed for Gulf Coast disaster area

***Vancouver-based Forward Edge International
sending people and material to the desperate
and destitute survivors of Hurricane Katrina.***

September 6, 2005

Two tractor-trailers, a 32-passenger bus, and 20 Portland-area volunteers will depart September 12 on a cross-country trek of mercy for the Katrina disaster area, announced executive director Joseph Anfuso of Forward Edge International, a Vancouver-based nonprofit relief and service organization.

And by this time next month, 60 to 70 more individuals on two Forward Edge volunteer teams—one from Portland, the other from California—will also make a road trip of mercy to the Gulf Coast to deliver necessities to Katrina's victims in wretched conditions and desperate need. The volunteers will not only deliver materials, but also join life-saving efforts, from direct medical support to staffing warehouses and helping in the massive clean-up.

"We're signing up volunteers from around the country for both short-term and mid-term stints," Anfuso said. "Short-termers will spend 1-2 weeks in the disaster zone, and mid-termers 3-6 months."

Anfuso also confirmed that FEI has two veteran field coordinators on the ground in Mississippi and Louisiana, both of them experienced in disaster response. The field coordinators will direct FEI volunteer efforts to the best and most effective use.

Forward Edge is receiving donations toward the purchase of the following supplies:

- "Comfort Packages": water and water purifiers, packaged nonperishable food, hygiene products, phone cards, Wal-Mart cards, fast-food cards, pens and notebooks, flashlights, radios, batteries.
- Larger items: blankets, cots, clothing, generators, medical supplies.

Donations for these supplies may be sent to Forward Edge International, 15121-A NE 72nd Ave., Vancouver, WA 98686; please make checks payable to Forward Edge. Or go online to forwardedge.org and click on the Donate icon.

FEI is part of a national relief network with access to emergency aid in 18 warehouses across the country, from which desperately needed supplies will be transported to the disaster areas.

Beyond the initial relief response—and in keeping with its organizational precedent spanning more than two decades—Forward Edge will extend its efforts into a long-term recovery phase, including clean-up and reconstruction.

FEI has a history of delivering aid and assisting in reconstruction projects following natural disasters—tasks that typically create ongoing relationships with a country's or community's people and long-term development projects in those communities. Teams and material were dispatched earlier this year to Sri Lanka's tsunami-ravaged coasts...to Manhattan's Ground Zero immediately following the 9/11 attacks (2001)... to earthquake-stricken El Salvador (2000)...to Nicaragua following Hurricane Mitch (1998).

For more information about the response of Forward Edge International to the Hurricane Katrina disaster relief efforts along the Gulf Coast, phone 360-574-3343. For information about volunteering in the disaster area along the Gulf Coast—whether just you, or a group from your church, school, or organization—contact Helen Little at katrina@forwardedge.org (360.5743343).

About Forward Edge International...

Since 1983 Forward Edge International has mobilized young people and adults to express God's love in practical ways in the U.S. and around the world. FEI organizes and facilitates teams of short-term volunteers (from churches, schools, and campuses) to complete service projects, distribute emergency aid, and—in the words of executive director Anfuso—“be the hands and feet of Jesus.” In its two decades this nonprofit has equipped and sent more than 700 shortterm mission teams and 8,000 volunteers to 33 nations.

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