All Hands Announces Project Tohoku, a Japan Tsunami Volunteer Response

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Ofunato, Japan (PRWEB) March 31, 2011 -- After the devastating earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan a few weeks ago, All Hands is announcing Project Tohoku, a Japan tsunami response project. All Hands will provide coordinative support to organizations on the ground, and utilize local and international volunteers to help with recovery efforts.

The magnitude 9.0 earthquake that struck on March 11, and the devastating tsunami that followed, wiped out many coastal communities, including Ofunato and Rikuzen Takata (both in Iwate prefecture). Tens of thousands of homes were damaged in Iwate alone, where nearly 44,000 people remain in evacuation shelters.

Days after the disaster, All Hands sent out an assessment team to Japan. After meeting and speaking with officials in the area, All Hands was asked to provide support to the local governments of Ofunato and Rikuzen Takata. All Hands anticipates a significant need for warehousing/logistics and distribution support, debris sorting and clearing.

“We hope to set up a distribution center to manage the flow of goods coming into that area and hopefully provide intelligence on what the area might actually benefit from,” said All Hands Founder David Campbell, who spent the past two weeks in Japan. “We have additional members of our team arriving in Japan tomorrow. And two more members of the team arriving next weekend. We believe we have a good team on the ground.”

All Hands will first focus on gathering volunteers from the affected communities and providing them with the resources and organized work to help them rebuild. Then All Hands anticipates being able to open our project to international volunteers who speak Japanese or have other specific skillsets that are needed.

“There's a tremendous desire to help from people within Japan and we have to balance that with a need for international volunteers,” Campbell said.

All Hands would like to thank the municipalities and leadership of Ofunato and Takata for their collaboration during the assessment, and look forward to working closely with them in the coming months.

You can learn more about All Hands' current progress at http://www.hands.org/japan.

About All Hands Volunteers – All Hands Volunteers is a US-based, 501(c)3 non-profit organization, that provides hands-on assistance to survivors of natural disasters around the world, with maximum impact and minimum bureaucracy. By supporting volunteers with housing, meals, tools, and organized work at no charge we are able to provide free and effective response services to communities in need. Our programs are directed by the needs of each community in which we work, ensuring a timely, relevant, and culturally sensitive response. For more information including a list of past and present projects go to http://www.hands.org.

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