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NEWS RELEASE

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AZUMANO TRAVEL ESTABLISHES DONATION ACCOUNT FOR SAMOAN RESIDENTS STRICKEN BY TSUNAMI

PORTLAND, OREGON (Oct. 6, 2009) - Azumano Travel has established a fund at Wells Fargo to gather donations for residents of Samoa affected by the recent tsunami there.

All donations made will be forwarded to the Mercy Corps relief agency. Contributions to Mercy Corps in the name of Samoan Relief can be made at any Wells Fargo bank in Oregon or Southwest Washington, or nationwide.

“With a large Samoan population here in the Northwest, and understanding how closely tied this region of the world is to tourism, I feel especially compelled to organize an effort that will provide some badly needed relief,” said Sho Dozono, president & CEO of Azumano Travel. “Our goal is to aid the residents there and get the infrastructure repaired as quickly as possible.”

Samoa is very dependent on tourism. And even as the initial rescue and clean up progresses, the residents’ future remains in peril.

“We saw this happen after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and again after Hurricane Katrina. Recovery is slow and can have a major impact on an economy that is already struggling,” said Dozono.

Sunspots International, a Portland based tour operator specializing in travel to the South Pacific, reports it is already feeling the impact of the tsunami.

“The south coast of Samoa seems to have incurred the most devastation,” said Rodney Smith, Sunspot’s vice president. “Two of Samoa’s most luxury resorts on the south coast have been wiped out, which will translate into thousands of tourist cancellations for the country.”

Based in Portland, Mercy Corps is a team of 3700 professionals that help turn a crisis into opportunity for millions around the world. See www.mercycorps.org.

“I have seen Mercy Corps in action and have every confidence they will make a huge difference in Samoa,” said Dozono. “I also encourage my peers within the travel and tourism industry to activate and support the people of Samoa, either through Mercy Corp efforts or other means of their liking.”

A History of Helping

Following 9/11, Azumano Travel displayed to the country it was safe to travel again by leading 1,000 Oregonians to New York City as part of the “Flight For Freedom.” Those efforts brought life back into the crippled city’s economy. In 2005, Azumano Travel organized a “Flight Of Friendship” trip to Thailand as a show of support following the 2004 tsunami that ravaged that country. The trip showed the world that Thailand was again “open to business” and welcoming visitors. A second “Flight Of Friendship” trip was organized in 2007 when hundreds of Northwest residents traveled to New Orleans post Katrina and volunteered their services while supporting the economy through tourism.

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