

# ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

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## *Media Release*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **SOAR Immigration/Legal Services responds to the earthquake in Haiti**

In response to the devastating earthquake in Haiti, SOAR Immigration/Legal Services has opened its doors to Haitians who may qualify for Temporary Protected Status. This form of humanitarian relief can help Haitians who have been in the United States since Jan. 12, 2010, stay in the United States for 18 months. SOAR will assist these clients with obtaining work authorization for their time in the United States. The program has also provided referrals for international adoption to those individuals who feel compelled to invite a Haitian child into their home.

Since the earthquake, SOAR has received calls from many people in the Haitian community who are concerned about their relatives and want to know how to bring them to the United States. Many family members in Haiti are homeless or injured and some have not been located yet. SOAR will continue to be a source of assistance and information for Haitians and other immigrants who would like to reunite with family members abroad. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all affected by this horrible tragedy.

SOAR, a program of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, offers immigration assistance to refugees and immigrants on a variety of legal issues. The Cuban Haitian Assistance Program (CHAP) helps Cuban and Haitian people with a variety of legal and social services with the goal of promoting self sufficiency. Legal services include applying for legal permanent resident status, family reunification, work authorization and citizenship; social services involve employment, housing and mental health services. The program also provides crime and victimization seminars and citizenship classes to ensure that clients know their rights and can advocate for themselves.

*Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations—including Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox bodies—congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.*

#### MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

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Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon » Episcopal Diocese of Oregon » Evangelical Lutheran Church in America » Greek Orthodox Church » Presbyterian Church (USA)—Presbytery of the Cascades  
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) » Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland » United Church of Christ » United Methodist Church » Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches