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# TULSA WORLD

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■ April 4, 2005 ■

## Tulsans heading to quake zone to help

► Three doctors and a minister are leaving today for Indonesia.

**By NICOLE NASCENZI**  
World Staff Writer

Three Tulsa doctors and a local minister are traveling to earthquake-ravaged Indonesia to help with international relief efforts.

In the past few months, two natural disasters struck parts of Indonesia, leaving many of the region's residents in need of medical care.

A March 28 earthquake in the region followed the devastating Dec. 26 tsunami, which left hundreds of thousands of people dead or missing.

"This is a great opportunity for us to help out and use the gifts that God gave us," Dr. Andy Le said.

The team plans to leave Tulsa on Monday, beginning a two-day journey to Nias, an island off the west-



SHERRY BROWN / Tulsa World

**Drs. Linda Som (left) and Andy Le, who are married, leave Monday for Nias, Indonesia, to help with medical aid to victims of the March 28 earthquake.**

ern coast of Sumatra. The 8.7-magnitude earthquake made transportation difficult, and the team plans to reach the island either by ferry or helicopter.

The doctors are medical resi-

dents from a Tulsa-based program called In His Image. The program trains doctors in Christian family practice.

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## QUAKE:

The team will endure primitive living conditions while in Indonesia.

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The residents will take a break from their traditional studies to conduct relief work in Indonesia.

Before the earthquake, Le and his wife, Dr. Linda Som, planned to travel to the Banda Aceh region to continue tsunami-relief efforts started by another team of IHI doctors in January.

But now Le, Som and Dr. Amy Hayes will head to Nias to treat those who were critically injured in the massive earthquake, which killed more than 1,000 people.

Ric Shields, the director of Open Doors, a Broken Arrow-based ministry specializing in international outreach, will travel with the team and help coordinate its efforts.

Som said she struggled with the

decision to go to Nias.

As a child, she spent several years in a refugee camp in Cambodia, and those difficult years still haunt her. She said she was afraid that the devastation on the island where more than 500 are reported dead and countless injured would be too much for her to take.

She said the Lord helped her see that she was meant to help the earthquake victims.

"All those people are wounded like I was wounded. . . . God showed me that I can give them strength and hope," Som said.

Shields said electricity, telephone and water service are not functioning on the island, so the team is prepared to deal with difficult living conditions.

The members are taking lots of water and plan to sleep on mats under mosquito tents.

With the threat of aftershocks and a host of unknown conditions awaiting them, team members are feeling a mix of excitement and trepidation about their journey.

Le said they are unsure what to expect but that he believes that they will be treating patients with

### How to help

Donations can be made to the In His Image Disaster Relief Fund by mail, 7600 S. Lewis Ave., Tulsa, OK 74136; or online at [www.inhisimage.org](http://www.inhisimage.org).

More information is also available by telephone at 493-7816, Ext. 5.

critical injuries including infections, broken bones, malnutrition and emotional trauma.

Hayes said traveling halfway around the world to assist with disaster relief should not be seen as an exceptional act.

"We are not going to be heroes; we are just going to be obedient to God," she said.

The members of the relief team said they are obligated to use their God-given talents to help others.

Dr. Mitchell Duinink, the director of the residency program, said he has a great deal of faith in his students because they all have extensive international experience.

Duinink said many international organizations are cooperating to make this relief effort a reality and

that IHI has received a great deal of support from Tulsans in recent months.

The Tulsa team will be working with a group of doctors from China, including a graduate of the IHI program, said Bridget Burritt, the director of development and communications for IHI.

The outpouring of financial aid IHI received for its tsunami-relief efforts will be moved into a general disaster relief fund so the medical residency program can be ready to help with future disasters. Some of the money is being used to help send the team to Nias.

"When something like this comes up, we have to be ready to respond quickly," Duinink said.

He said he believed that the world will see an increasing number of disasters.

Some Christians, including Duinink, believe that the increase in disasters can be traced to end-of-times predictions in the Bible.

"As an organization and as individuals, we want to be ready and willing to respond," he said.

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