

VCOM Students and Faculty Help Tornado Victims

Students from VCOM's Association of Military Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons (AMOPs) Club traveled to Suffolk Virginia to help victims of recent tornados which struck the Virginia area earlier this month. Three faculty members and eleven students participated in activities to help military families who needed assistance, many with loved ones deployed to Iraq.

Efforts were initiated by Colonel Vaden Blackwood, D.O. (ret.), VCOM faculty member and AMOPs advisor, and led by Dean Dixie Tooke-Rawlins and Associate Dean, Dr. Jan Willcox. The Virginia Osteopathic Medical Association (VOMA) was also provided support for the relief team.

"The students looked to provide any supportive measures families needed", stated Jan Willcox, D.O., Associate Dean for Clinical Academic Affairs at VCOM. "Our AMOPs students were terrific; they helped the families in any way they could from walking dogs and mowing lawns to picking up debris and repairing portions of walls and fences to providing much needed emotional support. Some of the families had their homes totally destroyed." Financial donations were also collected by the VCOM community and distributed directly to those who needed the assistance by the relief team.

VCOM is committed to providing relief efforts as one component of its ever expanding medical missions program. Past relief efforts included providing medical aid in India after the Tsunami; setting up temporary medical "clinics" in three locations in Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina; and traveling to Missouri to assist flood victims earlier this year. Student are also slated to provide medical and relief efforts next month in Peru.