

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Karin Pouw  
(323) 960-3500  
[mediarelations@churchofscienceology.net](mailto:mediarelations@churchofscienceology.net)

October 1, 2011

### **Meet a Scientist—Koji Minami: The Cornerstone of Japan's Volunteer Ministers Earthquake and Tsunami Response**

*In the wake of the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami, Volunteer Ministers from six continents traveled to Japan to help in the shelters and villages. Scientist Koji Minami coordinated their actions. He is featured in honor of Scientology Volunteer Ministers week August 20-27, 2011.*

The 9.0 magnitude earthquake that struck Japan March 11, 2011, killed more than 15,000, displaced 300,000, injured nearly 6,000, and caused hundreds of billions of dollars in damage, creating so much impact it shifted the Earth on its axis by nearly 4 inches.

Japan's Prime Minister Naoto Kan described it as the worst disaster since the end of the World War II.

In Tokyo, more than 200 miles from the epicenter, Scientist Koji Minami felt the shock in more ways than one: He realized he needed to take an active role in the disaster response.

“With the earthquake and tsunami, people descended into a state of sorrow, and the sorrow spread,” says Minami. “I decided I had to do everything in my power to help.”

Leaving immediately for Sendai, largest city in the disaster zone, Minami coordinated the work of the Scientology Volunteer Ministers who arrived from around the world to help in the villages and shelters. With Minami’s help as translator, the Scientology Disaster Response Team surveyed the area and spoke with officials, other relief organizations and community leaders. By finding out what was needed and wanted they were able to provide the services that really made a difference.

They worked in the search and rescue effort; manned shelters in Idda, Ishinomaki, Kesenuma, Onagawa, Sendai and Watari; worked in distribution centers to organize the delivery of food, water and supplies; administered shelters; and assisted on the cleanup of towns and villages that were destroyed.

And they provided Scientology assists—techniques developed by L. Ron Hubbard that orient people in their present environment, helping them overcome trauma and stress, thus speeding recovery from illness and injury.

“These are the simplest and easiest technology we have, and yet the help they bring is so powerful,” says Minami. “The success stories come in an avalanche. An old man who could not stand began walking after he

received an assist, and another resolved to start his life anew where before he wanted to give up forever.

“We created minor miracles like this on a daily basis. We cheered up the elderly, trained young people in Volunteer Minister technology and changed despair to hope in the most terribly affected areas. Scientology Volunteer Minister activities enable people to dream again—the best thing a person can do. It was wonderful to be a part of it.”

Minami, a Scientologist since 1993, is no stranger to public service. Since his days as a student of social sciences at Keio University, he has been dedicated to social betterment.

“When I was a university student I thought I was alone, searching for spiritual freedom and the way to bring peace,” he says. “When I read *Scientology: The Fundamentals of Thought* by L. Ron Hubbard, I knew the first part of my quest was completed. I had found the truth.”

Incensed by abuses in Japanese psychiatric hospitals, Minami established a chapter of the Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR). They exposed fraudulent billings and tax evasion to the tune of more than half a billion dollars, and blew the whistle on mysterious disappearances and deaths, illegal use of restraints and violations of the rights of the disabled. CCHR’s work resulted in criminal convictions and new bulletproof health codes with oversight that prevents such crimes.

For his accomplishments in championing the rights of others, Minami earned the International Association of Scientologists Freedom Medal for 2003.

When Minami reflects on what he accomplished as part of the Scientology Disaster Response Team in the villages and shelters of Northeastern Japan following the earthquake, these are among his proudest memories.

“Scientology Volunteer Minister activities have changed my life and I’ve seen it change the lives of thousands of others—those who gave as well as those who received the help.”

To learn more about what Scientologists are doing to create a better world, watch “Meet a Scientologist” videos at [www.Scientology.org](http://www.Scientology.org). To learn more about the Scientology Volunteer Ministers, visit their website at [www.volunteerministers.org](http://www.volunteerministers.org).

###

*The popular “Meet a Scientologist” profiles on the Church of Scientology International Video Channel at Scientology.org now total more than 200 broadcast-quality documentary videos featuring Scientologists from diverse locations and walks of life. The personal stories are told by Scientologists who are educators, teenagers, skydivers, a golf instructor, a hip-hop dancer, IT manager, stunt pilot, mothers, fathers, dentists, photographers, actors, musicians, fashion designers, engineers, students, business owners and more.*

*A digital pioneer and leader in the online religious community, in April 2008 the Church of Scientology became the first major religion to launch its own official YouTube Video Channel, which has now been viewed by millions of visitors.*



Scientologist Koji Minami (right) with the President of General Affairs at Onagawa Shelter in Sendai.



Scientologist Koji Minami with an elderly woman he helped with a Scientology assist at a shelter in the disaster zone.