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# news release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Joni and Friends announces alliance to empower Christians with disabilities to share the Gospel: Global Media Outreach trains online missionaries**

**AGOURA HILLS, Calif., July 29, 2010** – While [Joni and Friends International Disability Center](#) has long been about sharing the message of Christ with individuals with disabilities, through a new relationship with Internet ministry [Global Media Outreach](#) (GMO), the ministry will now empower Christians with disabilities to share the Gospel with others via the Internet.

Connecting through this new collaboration, both GMO and Joni and Friends further the vision to accelerate Christian ministry in the disability community and present a new option for Christians affected by disability to share the Gospel message.

“Think of the thousands of disabled people who can serve the Lord from their homes as online missionaries – I get a lump in my throat just thinking about the possibilities,” said Joni and Friends founder and CEO [Joni Eareckson Tada](#). “Like the Lord says, the fields are white unto harvest ... and people with disabilities can reap much for His kingdom.”

GMO provides access for Christians to become online missionaries (OM), following up via e-mail with those who may be seeking information about Christ on over 100 GMO websites. The OM program includes more than 5,000 trained Christians, some of whom have disabilities. OM’s share the Gospel with people in 195 countries. Furthermore, GMO’s strategic alliance with Joni and Friends will create a nexus of ministry resources and knowledge to increasingly present the Gospel to the 650 million people in the world affected by disability who the Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization calls “[one of the largest under reached people groups in the world.](#)”

As part of its new relationship with GMO, Joni and Friends will recruit ministry friends and participants affected by disability, referring them directly to GMO for online missionary training. Joni and Friends will similarly providing training and resources for GMO volunteers in ministering to individuals with disabilities. Finally, Joni and Friends will connect GMO Online Missionaries with its network of churches with disability ministries in order to refer individuals they engage with online back to a local church for discipleship.

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With just a computer and Internet connection, believers with disabilities and a heart to reach people searching for Christ can become an OM. Through GMO, online missionaries are educated and trained to meet the increasing requests for knowledge about God. The GMO OM program provides training, online resources for volunteers to use when answering questions and the benefit of sharing faith with people from all over the world. More information for Christians affected by disabilities to become OMs can be found at [tinyurl.com/MissionsOnlineJAF](http://tinyurl.com/MissionsOnlineJAF).

OM's have reported the program has not only provided an opportunity to minister to others, but often increases their own spiritual growth, prayer life and vision for world missions. "Being an online missionary has been the best thing for me, for my ministry, and my personal growth as a Christian," said Joni and Friends Ministry Associate Tait Berge. "Because of my disability, not many strangers would allow me to come into their lives and lead them to Christ, but they can't see me through the computer. Therefore, I can lead them to Christ without any restrictions. I can use my writing skills, knowledge of Scripture and theology, and experiences to get the message out effectively. I can reach people all over the world with the love of Christ – just from my computer. How cool is that?"

Joni and Friends International Disability Center serves the disability community through a wide array of life-affirming ministries to people with disabilities around the world, including international radio and television programs featuring inspirational stories. Wheels for the World enables thousands of individuals to receive wheelchairs and the life-giving message of the Gospel. Every year families affected by disability learn that they are not alone when they attend Family Retreats across the U.S. and around the world. The Joni and Friends Christian Institute on Disability equips the Christian community to engage in bioethics and value of life issues. More information can be found online at the ministry's new website, [www.joniandfriends.org](http://www.joniandfriends.org).

GMO is a California-based ministry with the vision of providing everyone multiple opportunities to know Jesus, build them in their faith and connect them to Christian communities. GMO is using Internet and other emerging technologies to effectively and efficiently convey the love of Christ and plan of salvation across the globe. Since their inception in 2004, GMO has seen the number of people indicating a decision for Christ grow from 21,066 people annually to more than 10 million people in 2009. Online missionaries responded to over 1.9 million e-mails last year.

- 30 -

**Note to Editors:** For more information about Joni and Friends, please visit [www.joniandfriendsnews.com](http://www.joniandfriendsnews.com). To arrange an interview with Joni and Friends representatives, please contact Melany Ethridge at 972.267.1111 or via e-mail at [melany@alarryross.com](mailto:melany@alarryross.com).