

*****For Immediate Release*****

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**Rockford Area Youth Receives Award
For Outstanding Volunteer Work**

(ROCKFORD April, 27th) In celebration of National Volunteer Week, Northern Illinois Food Bank held their 11th Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner – Celebration of Caring on Wednesday, April 22nd. During the event, volunteers were honored for their involvement in fighting hunger and feeding hope. Two organizations and seven individuals were given special recognition for the role they play in feeding the hungry. In particular one Rockford resident was honored with the Food Banks *Outstanding Youth Volunteer* award.

17 year old Marina Naz started volunteering with NIFB just under a year ago. She emigrated from Afghanistan in 2001 and wasn't taught any English until 2007. At first no one knew what she would be able to accomplish, but thought that it would be good for her to volunteer. Northern Illinois Food Bank soon realized it was even better for them. Naz has become one of the best dented can sorters the Food Bank has ever seen and has memorized the difference between a good can and a bad can. She runs her fingers over the surfaces of the can checking the severity of the dents and once she distinguishes the good from the bad she labels the can centering the label perfectly, an amazing feat considering Naz is blind. "Marina's story goes to show that anybody who is interested can make a difference in their community" says NIFB Volunteer Manager Tia Milne.

Naz and thousands of others provided over 55,000 volunteer hours last year to Northern Illinois Food Bank. Volunteers are a huge resource for the Food Bank, and they invite you to get involved!

About Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB)

Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) is a non-profit organization that provides food to all those in need through its 520 partner agencies in the following 13 counties - Boone, DuPage, DeKalb, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, Ogle, Stephenson, Will and Winnebago. NIFB acquires, gathers, handles and distributes donated, government and purchased food to more than 40,600 different people each week through local food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, youth activity centers and other food assistance sites. In 2008, NIFB distributed over 22.5 million pounds of food.
