

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



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**Local Singer Donates Voice to Feed Hungry  
Teams up with Northern Illinois Food Bank for creative iTunes fundraising effort**

(June 26<sup>th</sup>) – While singer and songwriter, Julie Sparks was working at a bank in the western suburbs, she heard stories from a growing number of customers who had lost their jobs and were spending their life savings to stay afloat. Without the financial resources to help these customers she struggled to find a creative way to be of service. She realized she could use her writing and vocal talents to help. She penned a song that would become her anthem; *Out of the Blue*.

“The teenager embarrassed that her mom lost her job, the father who is faced with the reality that he can’t meet the needs of his family, to the retired couple seeing their assets evaporate before their eyes, all inspired *Out of the Blue*.” said Sparks. “People who have never needed help before need to know that there are resources available to help them. This song is a message of hope.”

After writing the catchy song on the back of a bank envelope during her lunch break, she approached another bank - Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) – with her vision to help. “Julie is very passionate about helping people and we found her creative approach inspiring,” said Jarrod Daab, Associate Director of Development for NIFB. “The numbers of people seeking food assistance right now is like nothing we have ever seen; no one is immune. Julie is doing her part to make a difference and we are proud to partner with her.”

Sparks gathered a diverse group of people who share the message of the timely tune to produce it, develop a Web site, [www.OutOfTheBlueUSA.com](http://www.OutOfTheBlueUSA.com), create a CD and make it available for download on iTunes in order to raise money for NIFB. A portion of the proceeds of each sale and download go directly to Northern Illinois Food Bank.

Sparks took the musical concept of *Out of the Blue* a step further and held a remix competition that had hundreds of submissions from around the world to choose from. On the CD is a dance remix, a hard rock remix, as well as a Reggae remix. The song, *Out of the Blue*, was written by Sparks and produced by her friend and Grammy award winning producer, Glenn Rosenstein, in Nashville TN early in March of 2009. Out of the Blue USA has already raised over \$1000 in cash donations and over 500 lbs of non-perishable food items for the NIFB since its launch on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

**About Out of the Blue USA**

Out Of The Blue USA is a Food Assistance Outreach organization based out of the suburbs of Chicago to share hope-filled, purpose driven music to encourage and uplift those that are hardest hit by the tough financial times. Music can be a healer, and through the lyrics of the self titled anthem, Out Of The Blue USA aims to raise funds by the downloading of the song on iTunes, CD Baby, and purchasing the Maxi Single in person at Food Assistance Awareness events scheduled weekly in the Chicagoland area. A portion of the net proceeds of each sale and download go directly to the Northern Illinois Food Bank, which serves the needs of the 13 northern counties that surround Cook County. To hear a few of the remixes and title tracks please visit [myspace.com/outoftheblueusa](http://myspace.com/outoftheblueusa). The song, *Out of the Blue*, is available for purchase and downloads on iTunes and CDBaby. To learn more, visit [OutOfTheBlueUSA.com](http://OutOfTheBlueUSA.com) or [OutOfTheBlueUSA.blogspot.com](http://OutOfTheBlueUSA.blogspot.com).

**About Northern Illinois Food Bank**

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 50,000 different people each week through local food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, youth activity centers and other food assistance sites. In 2009 NIFB distributed over 26million pounds of food. For five consecutive years NIFB has received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and is one of only 3% of charities in the nation to have achieved this recognition for fiscal responsibility. NIFB's main office and warehouse is located in St. Charles with branches in Lake County, Rockford and an office in Joliet. NIFB is a member of Feeding America

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