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Illinois Eye-Bank spotlights local residents to celebrate Eye Donor Month

CHICAGO – National Eye Donor Month is being celebrated close to home this March, with a special message from Illinois residents who support eye, organ and tissue donation.

The Illinois Eye-Bank has created a March calendar featuring 31 Illinois residents – one for each day of the month – offering their reasons for signing up on the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry.

The Eye-Bank has also launched a new and improved Web site at www.illinoiseyebank.org, in time to feature a different person's Donor Registry story each day during the month of March.

"The Illinois residents we're featuring during Eye Donor Month made the decision to give the gifts of life, sight and mobility," says Mary Schlereth, the Illinois Eye-Bank's Community Engagement Coordinator. "We hope their stories will encourage others to join the Registry as well."

The Eye-Bank's ***I Joined!*** campaign (www.IJoined.org) aims to educate the public about the importance of joining the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry. During Eye Donor Month, the Eye Bank is hoping to help set new records for Donor Registry participation in Illinois.

The poster-sized Eye Donor Month calendars will be displayed in places where communities gather, such as libraries and town halls, as well as in hospitals and schools. The calendar will also be viewable online.

Charitable contributions in honor and in memory of those who have supported eye, organ and tissue donation are also welcome. Contributions can be made online at www.illinoiseyebank.org or by mail to the Illinois Eye-Bank, 547 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 600, Chicago 60661.

March has been recognized by Congress as National Eye Donor Month since 1983, in an effort to increase public awareness of the ongoing need for eye donors.

The Illinois Eye-Bank is a division of Midwest Eye-Banks, a charitable not-for-profit organization dedicated to the restoration of sight. It recovers, evaluates and distributes human eye tissue for transplantation. It also supports research into the causes and cures of blinding eye conditions, promotes donation awareness through public and professional education, and provides humanitarian aid to people in need of corneal transplantation throughout the world. Visit www.illinoiseyebank.org or call (800) 548-4703 for more information.

