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## **Northern Illinois Food Bank Welcomes New Chief Philanthropy Officer to Advance Mission and Community Impact**

Geneva, IL (May 8, 2025) — Northern Illinois Food Bank is pleased to announce the appointment of Colleen Ahearn as its new Chief Philanthropy Officer. In this role, Ahearn will lead the Food Bank’s fundraising, marketing, and volunteer engagement efforts across its 13-county service area.

Ahearn brings more than 20 years of nonprofit leadership experience with a track record of galvanizing communities, building strong partnerships, and driving strategic growth. She most recently served as Vice President of University Advancement at Lewis University, where she successfully led the institution’s largest-ever fundraising initiative, a \$50 million comprehensive campaign, and supported its historic merger with St. Augustine College.

“Colleen’s professionalism, strategic mindset, and passion for service stood out among a highly competitive pool of candidates,” said Julie Yurko, President and CEO of Northern Illinois Food Bank. “Her interpersonal strengths and deep enthusiasm for our mission make her a tremendous asset as we continue working to ensure no one goes hungry in Northern Illinois.”

Prior to her work in higher education, Ahearn served as Executive Director of San Miguel School Chicago and Community Center, where she led the campaign and reopening of a vital neighborhood resource hub offering food distribution, educational support, and recreational programming for families in Chicago’s Back of the Yards neighborhood. She also held marketing and leadership roles with the YMCA of Greater St. Louis and Ballwin Parks and Recreation.

“I’m honored to join Northern Illinois Food Bank and contribute to its vital mission,” said Ahearn. “I’m inspired by the team’s commitment and excited to collaborate with our generous donors, volunteers, and partners to create lasting impact through community and compassion.”

Ahearn holds a bachelor’s degree in education with a concentration in communications from DePaul University, where she was a two-year captain of the women’s soccer team. She earned her master’s degree in business analytics with a concentration in marketing

from Lewis University and became a Certified Fund-Raising Executive (CFRE) in 2012. She currently serves on the Board of Trustees for San Miguel School and Community Center.

**About Northern Illinois Food Bank**

For more than 40 years, Northern Illinois Food Bank has been dedicated to solving hunger and empowering neighbors. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit and proud member of Feeding America, the Food Bank serves 13 counties and provides 250,000 meals every day with dignity, equity, and convenience. Through a network of more than 900 food pantries, soup kitchens, and feeding programs, the organization works to ensure every community has reliable access to nutritious food and essential resources. To learn more, donate, or get involved, visit [SolveHungerToday.org](https://SolveHungerToday.org).