

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Joe Garza
Superintendent
(262) 789-6220
Joe.Garza@nbexcellence.org



NEW BERLIN, WI, FEBRUARY 8, 2012 -

**WISCONSIN'S TOP TWO YOUTH VOLUNTEERS SELECTED
IN 17TH ANNUAL NATIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM**

New Berlin student earns \$1,000 award, engraved medallion and trip to nation's capital

Zach Harmon, 12, a student at New Berlin West Middle/High School, was selected as Wisconsin's top Middle Level youth volunteer in the 2012 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism. The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, now in its 17th year, is conducted by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Zach, a seventh-grader, celebrates his birthday every year by conducting a food drive for a local food pantry, and last year alone delivered more than 4,500 pounds of food to feed hungry families. Zach got the idea for his annual "Z-Drive" when he saw the TV show "American Idol Gives Back." "I was amazed at how many people were living so poorly and had nothing," he said. Coincidentally, the very next day he saw a newspaper article about the local food pantry's need for more food to fill its shelves. Zach asked his parents if he could use money he had just received for his birthday to buy food for the pantry. He called the facility to see what was needed, bought the items and delivered them. "I saw what a need there was," he said. So, Zach decided to hold a food drive every April, the month of his birthday.

Zach started by spreading the word through email, word-of-mouth and posting flyers around town. To help, some of his classmates wheeled wagons door-to-door collecting food, some of his teachers held canned food drives in their classrooms and parents told their co-workers. Zach placed a bin at his front door for drop-offs and offered to pick up donations at people's homes. Every year, he stores the donated food in his basement and, with the help of his family, sorts and weighs the food before delivering truckloads to the pantry. After the food drive is over, he plans for the next year by updating his computer with new contacts and sending thank you notes to donors. "One of the most memorable parts of volunteering is seeing the shelves full of items that I collected," said Zach.

As a State Honoree, Zach will receive \$1,000, an engraved silver medallion, and an all-expense-paid trip in early May to Washington, D.C., where he will join the top two honorees from each of the other states and the District of Columbia for several days of national recognition events. Ten of them will be named America's top youth volunteers for 2012 at that time.

###

The School District of New Berlin does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability. Federal law prohibits discrimination in education and employment on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability.