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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Central Illinois Foodbank Presented with  
The Dr. Khalaf Al Habtoor and Congressman Paul Findley's Children Fund**

Springfield, Illinois (February 9, 2018) – A \$500,000 contribution, over a five-year period, from Dr. Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, Founding Chairman of the Al Habtoor Group, LLC of Dubai, United Arab Emirates has been awarded to the Central Illinois Foodbank in Springfield. The gift will be used to establish an endowment to fund programs that provide nutritious food to children in need throughout the Foodbank's 21-county service region.

Announcement of the *Dr. Khalaf Al Habtoor and Congressman Paul Findley's Children Fund* was made in Springfield by Chairman Dr. Khalaf Al Habtoor at a gathering of state, community and Central Illinois Foodbank leaders Friday afternoon. Dr. Al Habtoor learned of the Central Illinois Foodbank and its outstanding performance in providing for the needs of the hungry, and specifically the needs of hungry children, through his long-term relationship with retired U. S. Congressman Paul Findley.

"All people have the right to live a decent life," Chairman Dr. Khalaf Al Habtoor said. "I believe that philanthropy should be independent of race, religion and geography. With this thought in mind, I am very grateful and find much serenity through giving and sharing with the people and children of central Illinois."

“The people of this region are very fortunate to be served by an organization that is nationally recognized for innovation, efficient operations, controlling costs and management of revenues and donations to ensure that every available dollar is spent on providing food for the hungry. That is why we are so confident that the *Dr. Khalaf Al Habtoor and Congressman Paul Findley’s Children Fund* established through our gift will make a meaningful difference for the children in your cities, smaller communities and rural areas who are hungry.”

Craig Findley, the son of retired U.S. Representative Paul Findley, said it is hard to comprehend the depth of hunger’s presence in the heart of central Illinois. “From Quincy in the west to Effingham in the southeast, there are 35,000 children who are food insecure,” he said. “These are kids who literally don’t know where their next meal will come from.

“Through his career as a United States Congressman, my father is very proud to have worked with respected leaders and respected organizations to confront difficult, yet critical problems like childhood hunger.”

“Quite clearly, Chairman Dr. Khalaf Al Habtoor is one of those respected leaders. And again quite clearly, the Central Illinois Foodbank is one of those respected organizations. Our family is honored to join in the work underway to resolve childhood hunger in central Illinois.”

Central Illinois Foodbank Executive Director Pam Molitoris said “children have always been a mission-based focus for the Foodbank. In 2017, the Foodbank conducted 90 Healthy Food Distribution events in under-served urban and rural areas throughout the 21-county service region.”

“The majority of these Food Distribution events (62 out of 90) were Kids’ Healthy Food Distributions,” she said. “Additionally, 37,000 meals were distributed in 2017 through our Kids’ Cafe and Summer Food programs, which provided meals to children from two to 18 years of age through after-school and summer enrichment programs.”

“Revenues earned from the fund, in time, will feed nearly 4,000 children annually through *The Dr. Khalaf Al Habtoor and Congressman Paul Findley’s Children Fund*,” she added.

“We are deeply grateful to Congressman Paul Findley for his vision and the commitments he has made as a tireless public servant in retirement,” said Chairman Dr. Khalaf Al Habtoor.

“We also thank the Central Illinois Foodbank for its diligent pursuit of its mission to serve those in need of food and develop creative solutions to end hunger.”

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### **About Al Habtoor Group LLC**

The Al Habtoor Group, [www.habtoor.com](http://www.habtoor.com), has grown with the United Arab Emirates. What started out as a small engineering firm in 1970, is today one of the region’s most respected conglomerates with interests in the hospitality, automotive, real estate, education and publishing sectors. The Al Habtoor Group has earned itself a solid reputation both locally and internationally due to the vision of its Chairman, Dr. Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor.

The Al Habtoor Group is one of the UAE's most respected and successful businesses. Today it operates in the UAE and international markets. It employs thousands of highly-qualified, experienced professionals. Just as the name of the UAE has become synonymous with trade and enterprise all over the world, the name of the Al Habtoor Group has become synonymous with dynamic growth, evidenced by its commitment to develop and grow businesses in multiple sectors.

### **About Central Illinois Foodbank**

Central Illinois Foodbank, [www.centralilfoodbank.org](http://www.centralilfoodbank.org), established in 1982, distributes over 9 million pounds of food annually to nearly 160 food pantries, soup kitchens, residential programs and after-school programs in a 21-county region. Central Illinois Foodbank is a member of Feeding America, the nation’s largest hunger relief organization. The mission of the Foodbank is to collect donated food and grocery items from growers, manufacturers, processors, wholesalers and retailers for distribution to charitable agencies serving people in need.