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For Immediate Release:

SOJKA RECEIVES LOWELL SCHOLARSHIP FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE

CHARLESTON -- An Eastern Illinois University senior with a consistent track record for unselfish service to both the university and the community recently was awarded the Margaret and Walter Lowell Voluntary Service Scholarship.

Martha Sojka, a 21-year-old environmental biology major from Bridgeview, was nominated for the award by Roy Lanham, director of the Newman Catholic Center.

"(Martha) does not just float through life unaware of what is happening in the community and in the world. She seems to be in touch with the cycle of life. I am not making her into a Mother Theresa, but I believe she is close to actualizing that style of concern for the world in her life," Lanham wrote in his nomination.

Activities Sojka has been involved with while enrolled at Eastern include Habitat for Humanity (campus chapter), the Haiti Connection and EARTH (Expanding

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Awareness and Responsibility Towards Humanity). She has coordinated walk-a-thons for unity and was part of a group of students that coordinated a food drive during the Charleston Trailmobile lockout, while also serving coffee and soda to those on the line during the lockout. She has coordinated and organized recycling efforts at the Newman Catholic Center and ushers at church services on Sunday.

Sojka has also been an active participant of Alternative Spring Break, having served on both the planning committee and as a site leader. Her participation has taken her to communities in Arkansas and Tennessee, with a focus on bettering the local environments. She also spent 12 days in Haiti, volunteering her services in the mountain village of Barasa and working in a baby clinic in Portau-Prince with children suffering from AIDS and tuberculosis.

Margaret and Walter Lowell, who is dean emeritus of Eastern's College of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, reside in Charleston.

The scholarship is administered through the Eastern Illinois University Foundation which, with its endowment exceeding \$13.3 million, annually distributes more than 200 scholarships and awards to EIU students and faculty. All scholarships and awards are privately funded and held in trust by the Foundation.