

“Donating money is great.
But donating time, you see
how much it helps people”
—YASMIN ASSAR



YASMIN ASSAR, 16

HOW SHE HELPS: Collects used eyeglasses to be sent to developing countries

A CHILDHOOD MEMORY: Assar's late grandfather was blind in one eye—the result of minor surgery gone horribly wrong when he was a young man in Bangladesh. “It was always a challenge for him,” says Assar, who has worn glasses for near-sightedness since she was 7. “There will always be people to donate money for clothing or food,” she says, “but sight is something so basic. A lot of people don't think about it.”

Two years ago, starting with her own eye doctor's office, Assar began setting up drop boxes around her hometown of Stone Mountain, Ga., after first approaching the nonprofit Georgia Lions Lighthouse Foundation for help with distribution.

THE RESULT: 2,600 pairs of specs given to aid workers, who've taken them to Romania, Ghana, Bangladesh and Honduras. “I tell Yasmin's story to people,” says Christina Lennon, executive director of the Lighthouse Foundation. “I say, if she's 16 and can do this, then what can you do?”

By **Richard Jerome** and **Susan Schindehette**. Reported by **Michaele Ballard** in Hendersonville, N.C., **Robert Calandra** in Wyndmoor, Pa., **Cathy Free** in Layton, Utah, **Kristin Harmel** in Orlando, Fla., **Kristen Mascia** in Staten Island and **Ellen Piligian** in Carmel, Ind.