



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Volunteers Give Families a Financial Boost Through Citywide Tax Preparation Campaign

Washington, DC - Volunteers for the DC Earned Income Tax Campaign are gearing up to provide free tax preparation to low-income families in the greater DC Area, while educating them about financial resources.

Each year, an estimated 7,000 to 11,000 eligible DC residents don't claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), forfeiting an estimated \$15 million in federal refunds. The EITC is a credit targeted at low-income workers, helping to reduce poverty levels by supplementing their income and reducing their taxes.

Over 500 volunteers are needed to help ensure that these dollars are rightfully claimed, and that taxpayers receive information that can help them climb the economic ladder. Volunteers serve as Tax Preparers, Interpreters and Savings Promoters, who educate clients on free financial resources and saving options.

"We can't all give money, but giving our time on this campaign can help put up to \$6000 into the pocket of a low-income family, which is an impressive return on investment. Plus, by sharing information on money management classes, bank accounts and savings, we are helping people secure a better future," said Page Schindler Buchanan, who volunteered as a Savings Promoter last year and now serves as the Volunteer Coordinator for the Campaign.

The volunteer experience is rich and, at times, poignant. **One on one, volunteers work with taxpayers to both help with their taxes and plan for the future.**

"One individual did not file taxes for several years. He was very uncomfortable with dealing with the government," said Volunteer Tax Preparer Xavier Hixon. "I provided him with the law and informed him of his rights and his responsibility. When he received his return, he paid off his bills, opened up a business and took his family on a dream trip. He returned to say thank and cried on my shoulder for hours. Now, he is a tax-paying citizen with an up and growing business."

The DC EITC Campaign provides free tax assistance to taxpayers in the greater DC area earning up to \$22,000 for individuals or \$42,000 for households. During the 2009 income tax filing season, the Campaign assisted more than 5,000 low-income taxpayers, with an average annual income of about \$17,000.

All of the required training to volunteer is provided by the Campaign and Tax Preparers are certified by the IRS. Volunteers commit to one 3-4 hour shift per week at one of 11 sites throughout the DC region for the 10 week tax season - late January through mid-April. The

Campaign is still accepting volunteers for the 2011 tax season, with an especially high need for Savings Promoters.

For more information on the DC EITC Campaign, visit [www.dceitc.org](http://www.dceitc.org) or call 202.419.1442.