

Lincoln's Free Tax Preparation and Filing

The Human Services Federation and the Lincoln Tax Assistance Coalition will provide free tax preparation services for residents who qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). In 2008, over 5,000 free tax returns were filed which resulted in \$4.3 million in refunds to our local economy.

The EITC is a special tax benefit for working people who earn low to moderate incomes. To be eligible for the EITC for tax year 2008, your earnings are as follows:

- The maximum amount of income you can earn and still get the credit has increased. You may be able to take the credit if:
 - You have more than one qualifying child and your earned income was less than \$38,646 (\$41,646 if married filing jointly),
 - You have one qualifying child and your earned income was less than \$33,995 (\$36,995 if married filing jointly), or
 - You do not have a qualifying child and your earned income was less than \$12,880 (\$15,880 if married filing jointly)

"The majority of families in this community that live in poverty are working families, and nobody who works full time and has children in their

home should be in poverty," said Rick Carter, Executive Director of the Human Services Federation and Chair of the Lincoln Tax Assistance Coalition. "Special emphasis will be placed on increasing the claiming of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and other federal tax credits created to increase the incomes of low income workers; and engaging low income families and individuals in a gradual process of building financial assets for the future."

The Lincoln Coalition is a public, private and non-profit collaboration between the Internal Revenue Service and the Human Services Federation. The group is part of a state and national movement to assist people who are working but still unable to make ends meet. Program support comes from the Lincoln Community Foundation, United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County, City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, Building Strong Families Foundation, and the Woods Charitable Fund. The work is made possible by the commitment and dedication of community volunteers.

For Free Tax Assistance Sites outside of Lincoln, call 1-877-659-7870.

Lincoln VITA Tax Sites and Hours

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) tax preparation sites are located throughout the city. All sites use E-filing which files taxes quicker. Direct deposit into a bank account gets the refund to citizens faster. No appointments necessary unless noted.

ANDERSON LIBRARY

- 3635 Touzalin Avenue
- Mondays, 4:30-7 p.m. (through Feb. 23 only)
 - Wednesdays, 4:30-7 p.m.
 - Sundays, 2:30-5 p.m. (through March 1 only)

ASIAN COMMUNITY & CULTURAL CENTER

- 2615 O Street
- Monday-Friday by appointment, call 477-3446

BENNETT MARTIN LIBRARY

- 14 & N Streets
- Tuesdays, 1-4 p.m.
 - Wednesdays, 1-3:30 p.m. (through Feb. 25 only)
 - Sundays, 1:30-4 p.m. (through March 1 only)

EISELEY LIBRARY

- 1530 Superior Street
- Monday, 1-3:30 p.m. & 4:30-7 p.m.
 - Thursday, 1-3:30 or 4:30-7 p.m.

GOOD NEIGHBOR CENTER

- 2617 Y Street
- Sunday, 1:00-4:30 p.m. (through March 1 only)

INDIAN CENTER

- 1100 Military Road
- Monday-Friday by appointment, call 438-5231 ext. 105

LINCOLN ACTION PROGRAM

- 210 O Street
- Mondays, 5:30-8 p.m.
 - Thursdays, 5:30-8 p.m. (through Feb. 26)
 - Fridays, 9-11:30 a.m.

SALVATION ARMY

- 2625 Potter Street
- Tuesday, 12-2:30 p.m. (through Feb. 24 only)

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENT BUILDING

- 301 S. 68 Street Place
- Mondays, 2-4:30 p.m.

UNL MAIN CAMPUS

- Student Union Building - 14th & R (Feb. 28-March 11)
- Monday thru Wednesday, 5-8 p.m.
 - Saturday and Sunday, 1-5 p.m.



Benjamin Schuerman (right), a senior finance major from Hallam and Richard Christensen (left), a senior accounting major from Sacramento CA provide free tax preparation for UNL neighbors at the UNL East Campus Union.

UNL Students Get Involved at Campus Tax Preparation Site

University of Nebraska-Lincoln students have provided free tax preparation service for the past three years. Dr. Linda Moody, assistant director of Student Involvement, says, "Our students gain real world experience through this volunteer opportunity. It helps accounting majors get internships."

In 2008, UNL student volunteers prepared 385 tax returns which generated \$623,000, including \$225,000 of Earned Income Tax Credit. The 26 student volunteers donated 5,200 hours to help low and moderate income families electronically file their returns. Those receiving refunds have said they plan to pay off bills, repair a car or pay their mortgage.

Benjamin Schuerman,

a senior accounting major from Hallam has served in the military. In addition to preparing general tax returns, he helps military families prepare tax returns. This is his second year as an EITC volunteer. "I like to see the smiles on their faces when I tell them how much money they will be receiving," says Ben. He adds, "It's also good work experience."

Free parking and childcare is also provided at the UNL sites. UNL students are also providing expertise six times at Everett and McPhee Elementary Schools and Carol Yoakum Community Center, where UNL interpretation services are provided.

To learn more, go to <http://involved.unl.edu/eitc> or call 472-2454.

What to Bring to Have Your Taxes Prepared

- W-2s and 1099s from your employer
- Social Security Cards (for yourself, spouse, children and other dependents)
- Copy of last year's tax return (very helpful)
- List of other income/expenses (itemized deductions)
- Childcare information (providers ID number & receipts for amount paid)
- Blank check or savings account information for direct deposit
- 1099s for interest, dividends, unemployment, government and miscellaneous income
- 1098 for student loan interest, mortgage interest or property tax

EXTENSION NEWS

New and Outgoing Lancaster County Extension Board Members

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County welcomes its newest extension board appointments—recently appointed to three year terms are Pablo Cervantes, Wesley Daberkow, Annie Stokes.



Pablo Cervantes (above left), Wesley Daberkow (above), and Annie Stokes (left)

Current officers are:

- Carna Pfeil, President
- Debhora Day, Vice President
- John Chess, Secretary/Treasurer

Extension thanks outgoing board members Oscar Rios Pohirieth (former Vice President) and Kendra Penrod for their contributions.

Extension board members assist

extension staff in establishing and accomplishing extension program goals and objectives. The work is in partnership with UNL Extension on priority issues through educational programs in agriculture, horticulture, pest management, nutrition and food safety, family living, home environment and 4-H youth development.



(L-R) Kendra Penrod and Extension Board President Carna Pfeil



(L-R) Oscar Rios Pohirieth and Extension Educator Gary Bergman.

Extension Board Association Scholarship Forms Due March 15

The Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards is accepting applications for their scholarship program for the 2009/10 academic year.

- One \$1,000 scholarship to any incoming freshman or transfer student enrolling into the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) or into the College of Education and Human Science (CEHS).
- One \$500 scholarship awarded to a current student of CASNR or CEHS, who is a sophomore or higher.

Applications are due by March 15. To obtain a scholarship application and for more information, go to <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Programs/award.shtml> or call Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180.