

NEWS RELEASE

For more information:

Cynthia Vignos

United Way of Greater Stark County

Vice President, Marketing and Strategic Communication

330-491-9954

cynthia.vignos@uwstark.org



**United Way
of Greater Stark County**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

United Way's VITA Program Ends Tax Season with Celebration, Awards

(Canton, OH) May 3, 2017 – United Way of Greater Stark County's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program celebrated another robust tax season on April 27th with a celebration that included recognition of volunteers and an awards presentation. In 2017, United Way of Greater Stark County's VITA program and its volunteers helped income tax clients in local communities collect over \$3 million in tax credits and refunds. 93 local volunteers donated 1,688 hours of their time and helped complete 4,166 Federal and State returns. In addition - since the VITA tax preparation service is free - residents of Stark and Carroll Counties saved \$368,725 in filing fees, an average \$175 savings per tax payer.

"I'm so proud of this team," said Robin Seemann, Income Impact Council Director of United Way of Greater Stark County. "VITA brings a substantial amount of money back into the community every year, stimulating the local economy. Because our volunteers receive specialized training from the Internal Revenue Service, they can find tax credits that can be overlooked by other tax assistance programs."

United Way of Greater Stark County was named VITA "Site of the Year" for the 4th consecutive year by the Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB) Association, and has been voted one of the top 3 tax services in Stark County in the Canton Repository's Readers' Choice Awards. United Way of Greater Stark County's VITA Coordinator Chrisann Leaman, and Seasonal Site Manager Tami Stephens were both chosen for "The Tremendous Twelve" list of OBB Top Tax Counselors.

"Financial Stability is one of United Way of Greater Stark County's BOLD GOALS, and the VITA Program is a great way to help local families work toward this, by building assets and avoiding predatory tax services," said UWGSC President and CEO Maria Heege. "The number of tax payers taking advantage of our free services grows every year...all of our appointments were filled!"

About United Way of Greater Stark County

United Way of Greater Stark County fights for the Health, Education and Financial Stability of every person in every community. We win by living United. By forging unlikely partnerships. By finding new solutions to old problems. By mobilizing the best resources. And by inspiring individuals to join the fight against their community's most daunting social crisis. Our mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our communities in Greater Stark County. In order to live better, we must live United. For more information about United Way of Greater Stark County visit www.uwstark.org. Headquarters are at 401 Market Avenue North, Suite 300, Canton, Ohio 44702. (330) 491-0445.

###