

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteers Needed to Prepare Taxes During Tax Season; Free Training & Certification are Offered

(Canton, OH) August 22, 2017 – Volunteers are needed to help in the upcoming tax season through the United Way of Greater Stark County’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. *No experience is necessary.* Individuals receive training and IRS Certification appropriate for their volunteer position, as well as materials for self-study on basic income tax law for federal and state returns. In addition, several specific training sessions will take place prior to the kick-off of tax season. Volunteers are covered under the Volunteer Protection Act and are not accountable for tax returns filed to the IRS.

Local college students in need of volunteer hours or professional networking opportunities are encouraged to apply. “VITA is a great way to gain tax knowledge while helping local families,” said Chrisann Leaman, VITA & MyBudgetCoach Coordinator at United Way of Greater Stark County. “Many volunteers have gone on to find good jobs preparing taxes. Considering what this program brings back to the community, it is time well-spent.” Tax clinics will be held at multiple locations throughout Stark and Carroll Counties, giving volunteer tax preparers many opportunities to participate.

Last tax season, United Way of Greater Stark County and its 93 VITA volunteers helped income tax clients in Stark and Carroll counties collect over \$3 million in tax credits and refunds. Local volunteers donated 1,688 hours of their time and helped complete 4,166 Federal and State returns.

“We are looking forward to another busy tax season,” said Robin Seemann, Financial Stability Impact Council Director of United Way of Greater Stark County. “VITA brings a substantial amount of money back into the community each year, which stimulates the local economy. Our volunteers are trained to identify tax credits that have been overlooked by other tax assistance programs. We get clients their maximum refund in a minimal amount of time.”

United Way of Greater Stark County was named VITA “Site of the Year” by the Ohio Benefit Bank Association for the past 3 years. VITA was also voted one of the top three tax services in Stark County in The Canton Repository’s Readers’ Choice Awards for the past 2 years.

Anyone interested in volunteering should complete the online VITA volunteer registration form at uwstark.org/freetax or contact **Chrisann Leaman**, VITA & MyBudgetCoach™ Coordinator at **330-491-9989** or chrisann.leaman@uwstark.org.

About United Way

United Way of Greater Stark County fights for the Health, Education and Financial Stability of every person in every community. The agency collaborates, convenes, and partners to support programs and initiatives that break the cycle of poverty, promote a healthy community where children are successful from kindergarten through graduation to a career, and where families have the tools, skills, and support they need to become financially independent. We win by living 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.

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