



Year-End Wrap Up: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

As we bid farewell to another tax season, it's time to reflect on the remarkable achievements of our United Way of Bradford County Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Our first year in the VITA program was a whirlwind of firsts. Our dedicated team of volunteers worked tirelessly to provide FREE essential tax preparation services to members of our community, ensuring that they maximize their refunds and eliminate their tax preparation fees.

Statistics Speak Volumes

Let's delve into the numbers that highlight the impact of our efforts:

- **751 Federal and State Returns and Rebates Submitted:** This figure represents the sheer volume of individuals and families who relied on our program for their tax preparation needs. Each return submitted is not just a form filled; it's a testament to our and our partner locations and sponsors commitment to serving the community.
- **27% Increase:** Thanks to our additional volunteers, expanded times, and locations, we were able to increase the number of people we assisted by 27% over the TCE program of the past.
- **Over \$200,000 Saved in Tax Preparation Fees:** One of the most significant advantages of using our VITA program is the cost-saving benefit. By offering free tax preparation services, we alleviate the financial burden that tax preparation fees can impose on individuals with limited resources. This group includes but is not limited to, those with disabilities, the elderly, and those with limited income.
- **\$529,117 Refunds Provided to Members of the Community:** This substantial amount signifies the financial relief and support we've been able to assist our community members in obtaining. These refunds can make a significant difference in the lives of individuals and families, whether it's covering essential expenses, saving for the future, or just paying for necessities.
- **\$145,800 Rebates:** Beyond refunds, state rent/property rebates play a crucial role in providing additional financial assistance to those in need. This amount underscores our commitment to maximizing all available resources to benefit our community members.
- **\$674,917 Worth of Money Brought Back into the Community:** Perhaps the most impactful statistic of all, this figure represents the collective financial boost experienced by our community. By securing refunds and rebates, we not only assist individuals and families but also contribute to the overall economic well-being of our community.

A Community Effort

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication and hard work of our volunteers. Their selfless commitment to serving others, coupled with their expertise in tax preparation, has been instrumental in the success of our VITA program. We are so lucky to have experienced VITA tax professionals working alongside our newest volunteers. Both groups were amazing!

We cannot assign a dollar figure to what was donated by our partner locations who willingly made their space available for use and our amazing sponsors who funded the project. Without them the VITA program would not be possible. Their caring, commitment, and willingness to assist our community members should be lauded.

Additionally, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who used our services. Your trust in our program empowers us to continue making a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, we remain steadfast in our mission to provide accessible and quality tax assistance for free to all members of our community. We are committed to expanding our reach, enhancing our services, and continuously striving for excellence in all that we do.

In conclusion, the achievements of our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program this past year are a testament to the power of community, compassion, and collaboration. Together, we've made a meaningful difference in the lives of many, and we look forward to continuing this important work in the years to come.

To volunteer or to find out more about the United Way of Bradford County's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program visit www.unitedwaybradfordcounty.org/vita

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If you would like to discuss this article with us further, please contact Lissa Clayborn, VITA Program Director at 570-485-5485 or vita@unitedwaybradfordcounty.org.