



United Way
of Thurston County

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Volunteer tax aides to provide free tax preparation

Tax season is quickly approaching and free assistance and preparation for low-income taxpayers will be available at various local sites from February 2 through April 15.

The Tax-Aide program, part of the AARP Foundation and offered in conjunction with the IRS, encourages taxpayers to file for the Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC. The EITC has been credited with lifting more families out of poverty than any other federal program, yet many still don't know about it or don't file. At free tax preparation sites, workers save filing costs and are not subjected to the high-cost refund anticipation loans – keeping more of the dollars they've earned. This can amount to up to \$4,800 this year for many working families.

United Way of Thurston County is coordinating the EITC outreach campaign in partnership with AARP, The Volunteer Center of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties, 2-1-1 Call Centers and the Thurston County Asset Building Coalition.

It is estimated that as much as 15 percent of EITC dollars go unclaimed each year in Thurston County alone. This outreach campaign is promoting the use of five free AARP Tax Aide sites throughout the county.

Call 2-1-1 for the days and times free tax preparation sites in Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, Yelm and Rochester are open.

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