

# VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA) PROGRAM

FREE, quality tax return preparation for individuals and families



## PROGRAM GOALS

1. To help low-to-moderate income families with tax preparation. Taxpayers are assisted with receiving tax credits that may add more than a month's worth of salary to the individual or family's annual income.
2. To provide financial literacy education to Kenosha County residents to promote self-sufficiency through wealth building and debt-reduction outreach programs for those outside the financial mainstream. Assets give people a stake in their future and in their community.

## ELIGIBILITY AND SITE INFORMATION

On-site Assistance is available at the following sites for individuals and families that make less than \$53,000:

- Kenosha County Job Center - January 30 through April 12 on Tuesday evenings from 6 - 9:00 pm or Saturdays from 9:00 am - noon
- Salem Community Library - March 3 through March 31 by appointment
- ELCA Outreach Center - February 4 through February 25 on Thursdays from 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
- Twin Lakes Community Library - February 4, 11, 18, and 25th on Thursdays from 4 pm - 7:30 pm
- Kenosha Public Library - Northside - February 2, 9, 16, and 23rd from 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

\*Free online tax preparation will also be available on the United Way of Kenosha website for those individuals and families making less than \$60,000, at [www.kenoshaunitedway.org/vita](http://www.kenoshaunitedway.org/vita).

## PROGRAM RESULTS

	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Volunteers Recruited	81	89	83
Returns Filed	1,862	2,388	2,781
Total Refunds	\$1,368,040	\$1,745,566	\$2,139,132

More than \$8.58 million refunded to local residents in the past six years!

## EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (EITC)

People who earn up to \$53,000 can claim refunds as high as \$5,657!

The average is about \$1,900.

Research shows the earned-income tax credit lifts more children out of poverty than any federal program. That's because the credit gives a big raise – up to 40 percent – to working low-income parents.

**\*25 percent of those eligible for this credit do not apply for it!**

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[WWW.KENOSHAUNITEDWAY.ORG/VITA](http://WWW.KENOSHAUNITEDWAY.ORG/VITA)

## GET INVOLVED!

Become a VITA volunteer today and help low-income taxpayers move toward financial stability! Register by contacting Laurie McDonald today at [lmcdonald@kenoshaunitedway.org](mailto:lmcdonald@kenoshaunitedway.org) or by phone at 262-658-4104.



### VOLUNTEER FAQs

#### I don't have any experience with tax preparation, can I still volunteer?

Yes! We only ask that volunteer tax preparers have an interest in tax preparation as well as experience working with a computer. If tax preparation isn't for you, there are other volunteer opportunities available such as, greeters, language interpreters, interviewers, quality reviewers, and site coordinators.

#### What is the deadline for becoming certified?

Volunteer tax preparers must be certified no later than January 25, 2016. Most clients visit tax sites in February and March, so tax preparers will be trained in January. Training sessions will take place the first three Saturdays in January. Training can also be completed online at [www.linklearncertification.com](http://www.linklearncertification.com).

#### What is the time commitment for volunteers?

Each volunteer must commit to training, which takes an average of eight hours, and we ask that volunteers prepare taxes four-five sessions, which would be 12-15 hours of preparation.

#### Can I still volunteer if I am not able to attend the training?

Training and certification is required for all volunteer tax preparers. However, we offer self-paced online training for volunteers as an alternative to classroom training and is available at [www.linklearncertification.com](http://www.linklearncertification.com). You can also volunteer as an interpreter (Spanish-speakers) or as a greeter.

#### What if I have questions or need assistance while I'm preparing a client's return?

Each site has a coordinator who is available to assist you and review each return before it is submitted.

### PROGRAM PARTNERS

Associated Bank  
Carthage College  
ELCA Outreach Center  
Gateway Technical College  
Guaranty Bank  
Kenosha County Job Center  
Salem Community Library

Kenosha Community Foundation  
Kenosha Public Library  
Kenosha Rotary West Foundation  
Twin Lakes Community Library  
IRS  
United Way of Kenosha County  
US Bank

### VITA Coalition:

