

a rainbow of opportunities



- Do you get a "kick" out of helping someone who really needs help?
- Do you enjoy making a contribution in your community?
- Are you willing to give a little of your time?
- Do you have an aptitude for tax work?
- Are you good at meeting and dealing with people from widely different backgrounds?
- Do you take pride in doing a good job?

If you answered "yes" to all or most of these questions, you are a prime candidate for one or more of the volunteer programs that the Internal Revenue Service offers in your community. You are needed. The IRS is not able to offer individual tax assistance to everyone. However, the IRS does train volunteers to help people. You can be one of them.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

VITA is one program where volunteers are needed. The IRS trains volunteers to help people prepare basic tax returns for those with a low to limited income, individuals with disabilities, and non-English speaking persons and elderly taxpayers. The volunteers serve in the community at neighborhood centers, libraries, churches, shopping malls and other convenient locations. Volunteers also provide assistance and return preparation for prior year federal income tax returns, as well as, the earned income and advanced earned income tax credit. A number of locations also offer electronic filing. People also are needed as instructors, site managers and publicity coordinators.

Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE)

TCE is another program where tax skills and a helping hand are offered. TCE offers free tax help to people who are 60 years or older. Many of the volunteers are retired themselves and are affiliated with nonprofit groups that have received grants to run a local TCE program. Grant funds are used to reimburse volunteers to pay mileage and other travel expenses so they can go wherever they are needed - retirement homes, neighborhood sites or private houses of the homebound.

Community Outreach Tax Education

In the Community Outreach Tax Education program individuals conduct lectures or seminars on some aspect of tax law. The presentations are targeted at groups of taxpayers who have a common occupation or tax concern - farmers, retirees and small business owners. Outreach is offered year-round at convenient community locations and at convenient hours, including evenings and weekends. Tax education seminars are tailored to the interests of each group attending. Tax return preparation sessions cover federal tax forms line-by-line so that taxpayers can prepare their returns correctly.

Small Business Tax Education Program (STEP)

Through the Small Business Tax Education Program (STEP) the IRS offers a variety of business tax workshops, seminars and college courses in partnership with community sponsors. Our nationwide sponsors include community, junior and technical colleges, universities, business and economic development agencies and chambers of commerce. In addition to Federal taxes, many programs include state and local requirements through cooperative efforts with those government entities.

Understanding Taxes Programs

Since nearly everyone will have to pay taxes eventually, what better time to learn the basics than while in school? Besides, many students already have part-time jobs or other sources of income requiring them to file a tax return. That's why the IRS has three Understanding Taxes Programs which provide basic tax education to students.

If you enjoy teaching, or helping others to teach, and are knowledgeable about taxation, you can help the taxpaying citizens of tomorrow by teaching these programs.

There are three programs offered:

Eighth Grade- Explains the evolution of taxes in our nation's history. Used as a supplement in eighth or ninth grade U.S. History courses, teaches students how tax policies of the past have affected those of today.

High School- An introductory tax course aimed primarily at high school students. Teaches about the American tax system and how to complete basic tax forms.

Post Secondary- Provides adult learners an introduction to, and practice with, completing and interpreting tax forms. Shows learners how to be responsible participants in the tax system.

Practitioner Education

Tax professionals can learn about recent tax law changes at Practitioner Institutes, which will enhance the professional quality of the services they provide. These institutes are sponsored by qualified educational institutions, state and local governments, professional and other nonprofit organizations. Qualified tax professionals who would like to volunteer to acquaint fellow practitioners with the latest developments in the tax field might enjoy serving in this program.

Student Tax Clinics

Perhaps you are willing to help a student in the field of taxation to get some "hands-on" experience providing counsel to taxpayers whose returns are being examined. Law and graduate accounting school students are given special permission to practice before the IRS on behalf of taxpayers who can't afford professional help. As a volunteer, you can help with clinic operations or even serve as a Student Tax Clinic Director.

Bank, Post Office and Library (BPOL) Program

This program offers a chance to give back a little to your community. The IRS supplies over 47,000 libraries, banks, post offices, technical schools, state and local governments, and similar facilities with free tax forms and instructions. Tax Forms on CD-ROM and reference materials are available at many participating libraries. Once the tax materials are placed at these facilities, patrons still have to be directed to the proper form, or booklet to suit their needs. That's where you can help.

In the case of all these programs, the Taxpayer Education Coordinator in your IRS district office can provide you with further information about these opportunities.

To get the most up to date tax products and information visit us on the World Wide Web at <http://www.irs.ustreas.gov>.

volunteer CALL THE IRS
TAXPAYER EDUCATION COORDINATOR
1(800)829-1040



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