

## **2010 TAX TIME WAS A LITTLE LESS TAXING THANKS TO NORWESCAP'S RSVP/VITA VOLUNTEERS**

In 2010, 58 VITA volunteers from Skylands RSVP of NORWESCAP assisted 2,245 seniors, low-income and disabled residents in filing their tax returns, insuring they received ALL the eligible refunds and credits they deserve.

The result? The 2,245 taxpayers received a total of \$2,205,460 in federal refunds.

This impressive amount in eligible refunds was returned to the most vulnerable segments of our communities and translated into money essential to meeting the costs of rising utilities, medical expenses and food expenses.

NORWESCAP RSVP/VITA volunteers also helped return \$390,881 dollars in eligible EARNED INCOME TAX CREDITS (EITC) to three hundred seventy one clients. Earned Income Tax Credits are available to all income eligible taxpayers. Eligibility requirements are somewhat complex to navigate through without assistance and as a result, many deserving low-income taxpayers don't file for this benefit. In our area, only 6% of those eligible actually file for the EITC.

NORWESCAP RSVP/VITA volunteers are trained to assist clients in navigating EITC eligibility and have successfully assisted in returning additional refunds to the very individuals the legislature intended to assist through EITC. When every dollar counts-EITC refunds help ease financial stress and benefits the larger local community by increasing expendable income, which can be used on essential goods and services.

### **OUR VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION**

Volunteer services from fifty-eight NORWESCAP RSVP/VITA volunteers helped infuse close to THREE MILLION dollars of income tax returns into three New Jersey counties last year alone.

#### **How did they do that?**

The dollars returned to NJ taxpayers were in part a result of the dedication of the volunteers who contributed hours of unpaid tax preparation services. Volunteers worked throughout the tax preparation season at one or more established sites. Understanding that the best of services aren't helpful if they can't be accessed, free tax preparation service is possible because volunteers are willing to give of their time on weekdays, weekends and evenings. This well coordinated effort makes the service readily available to clients. Our dedicated RSVP team goes above and beyond to make assistance accessible to all.

#### **Why do they do it?**

NORWESCAP RSVP/VITA volunteers have seen first hand the need *and the benefit outcome* of their personal commitment. NORWESCAP volunteers are New Jersey residents, helping their community neighbors, and investing in making a stronger New Jersey for everyone's benefit. We're proud to share that some NORWESCAP Skyland RSVP/VITA volunteers have offered more than twenty years of volunteer service to their communities.

#### **Personal satisfaction**

This year alone, one long-time volunteer processed over 95 returns! A first year volunteer came in a close second with 86 returns processed. In addition to the federal refund and EITC received, the combined efforts of these two volunteers translated into one hundred eighty one returns processed over a short tax preparation season and an additional client savings of \$2,7150.00 in tax preparation fees. (Based on an average cost of \$150.00 per filing).

RSVP/VITA volunteers are active throughout New Jersey and across the country. The measurable tax savings and value of service they provide is significant to families in need.

In Burlington County, 45 RSVP volunteers served 1,248 taxpayers (a savings of \$187,200 in filing fees) and helped clients realize over \$960,000 dollars in tax refunds. One hundred sixteen eligible clients were refunded an additional \$145,745.00 through the Earned Income Tax Credit, which they may not have

otherwise applied for when filing their return. RSVP/VITA volunteers are helping return needed dollars to clients and local economies in New Jersey and throughout the country. On the national front, RSVP/VITA volunteers are hard at work in communities just like those served by NORWESCAP's RSVP team. In these economic times, every dollar pumped back to our local economy is more than important...it's vital.

### **NORWESCAP'S RSVP VOLUNTEERS ANSWER THE CALL throughout the year**

NORWESCAP RSVP volunteers are active in New Jersey throughout the year. In addition to the RSVP/VITA team, 817 NORWESCAP serve over 100 different non-profit organizations in their communities.

Over 85,000 volunteer hours were logged last year alone. Calculated at the estimated value of \$20.85 per hour, the RSVP volunteer services program contributed \$1,777,046 in unpaid, volunteer assistance services during that period. Those services impact the quality of life for everyone living in Northwest New Jersey.

Collectively these neighbors and friends make an immeasurable contribution to the New Jersey neighborhoods they call home.

When people ask...

“What's so good about New Jersey?”

You can tell them...

NORWESCAP's RSVP!