

United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra
639 Isbell Rd., Suite 460
Reno, NV 89509
775-322-8668
www.uwnns.org



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Nevada and the Sierra**

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Media Contact: Scott Walquist, KPS3 Marketing
phone: 775-686-2116
cell: 775-287-6788
scott@kps3.com

United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra Assists Nevadans Receive Earned Income Tax Credits

Reno, Nev. — Nevadans maybe be eligible to receive a larger tax refund this year because of EITC or Earned Income Tax Credit. United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra (UWNNS) will join organizations across the country in recognizing Friday, Jan. 30 as EITC Awareness Day, a nationwide effort to increase awareness about EITC and free tax preparation sites. EITC is 40 years old this year, and for those 40 years, EITC made life easier for millions of workers. Last year, more than 27 million workers in the country received more than \$65 billion in EITC refunds.

EITC eligibility varies by income, family size and tax filing status. Individuals may be eligible for EITC if they worked last year and had income of less than \$52,427. EITC can mean up to a \$6,143 refund when an eligible individual files a return if they have qualifying children. Workers without a qualifying child could be eligible for a smaller credit up to \$496. On average, EITC adds \$2,400 to refunds.

“One-third of the EITC population changes each year,” said Karen Barsell, CEO and president of UWNNS. “The IRS estimates that four out of five workers claim the EITC they earned. This leaves billions of dollars on the table each year. We want to get the word out to those who are eligible to file a tax return even if they don’t owe any tax to claim the EITC. It’s money workers can use for groceries, rent, utilities and other bills.”

In order to assist individuals to determine if they are eligible for EITC, UWNNS will again offer tax preparation assistance for at various Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites throughout northern Nevada. VITA sites provide free tax preparation to individuals and families earning less than \$53,000 per year using trained, certified, volunteer tax preparers.

VITA sites provide a service to lower-income taxpayers by offering free income tax return preparation during the tax filing season. VITA volunteers help members of the community receive the best refund possible. Volunteers of all ages and backgrounds are welcome and will receive free tax training in cooperation with community partners and the IRS. Good computer skills are recommended to assist in preparing and transmitting tax returns through the IRS E-file program.

Last year during the tax season, nearly 200 volunteer tax preparers helped prepare more than 4,074 tax returns, bringing more than \$5.4 million in federal tax refunds back to the local communities throughout the northern Nevada region. Additionally, the volunteers helped taxpayers save more than \$970,000 in tax preparation costs.

In order to receive assistance in tax preparation, individuals are asked to bring the following to the VITA sites:

- A valid driver's license or other photo id card
- Social security cards, a social security number verification letter or the ITIN, individual taxpayer identifying number, for all persons listed on the return
- Birth dates for all persons listed on return

- All income statements: Forms W-2 and 1099, Social Security, unemployment, and other statements, such as pensions, stocks, interest and any documents showing taxes withheld
- All records of expenses, such as tuition, mortgage interest, or real estate taxes
- Copies of last year's state and federal tax returns, if you have
- Bank routing numbers and account numbers to direct deposit any refund
- Dependent child care information: name and address of who you paid and either the caretaker's SSN or other tax identification number
- Both spouses to sign forms to e-file a joint tax return

To find out more about VITA locations and dates, visit uwnns.org, or contact Daniel Dachtler, AmeriCorps financial educator, at 775-325-8905 or by email at uwnns.fsp.vita@gmail.com.

About United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra

UWNNS has successfully served northern Nevada for more than 70 years. (UWNNS) has completed an historic direction-setting effort to identify and concentrate on the most important social issues affecting individuals and families in the region. UWNNS has adopted the critical issue of “children reading at grade level” as its focus area moving forward. This adopted issue will allow UWNNS to better prioritize resources to address key issues in order to make the greatest impact and create lasting change. In 2015, UWNNS will reach the goal of \$100 Million raised since we started in 1942. To celebrate this goal, we have established the \$100 Million Club and invite you to join us. For more information, call 775-322-8668 or visit www.uwnns.org.

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