



NEWS RELEASE

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STUDENTS OFFER FREE TAX FILING ASSISTANCE FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Jan. 23, 2014 – Student and faculty volunteers from Davenport University are trained and ready to kick off free income tax preparation sessions, available to low- and middle- income tax-filers (less than \$55,000 in total family income) at locations across West Michigan. Every year, millions of dollars in tax refunds and credits go unclaimed by those who need them the most. Taking advantage of free tax preparation services help West Michigan families receive tax refunds and credits that enable them to stay in their homes, feed their families, keep the lights on, and save for tomorrow.

Volunteers are providing assistance in conjunction with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, a cooperative effort of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and nonprofit groups that train volunteers to prepare basic tax returns in communities across the country. As volunteers, accounting students have been certified by the IRS to participate. Accounting students from Davenport University will be joined by their peers from Aquinas College, Cornerstone University and Hope College as well as members of the Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants (MACPA).

“These volunteer experiences give students a chance to ply their tax skills in real-world situations with actual clients while benefiting those who need assistance completing their tax returns,” said Judy Knapp, VITA Program Manager and Honors Accounting Faculty at Davenport University. “Most of the refunds and credits our clients receive are dollars spent locally, so this service also directly benefits our local economies.”

In 2013, 75 students and alumni participated in this program, logging more than 6,600 volunteer hours and totaling more than \$6.1 million in tax refunds and credits.

In 2014, the free tax preparation service will be available at 17 different sites across West Michigan, including Davenport University’s Peter C. Cook Center in downtown Grand Rapids and its W.A. Lettinga, Holland and Kalamazoo campuses. Aquinas College Library and Hope College also will serve as preparation sites this year. For a complete list of locations and times for VITA assistance, visit <http://taxhelp.davenport.edu>.

Tax assistance is offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Those wishing to take advantage of the free program should bring the following paperwork with them:

- Picture ID and social security card for filer and spouse, social security cards for dependents.
- Birth dates for primary, secondary and dependents on the tax return.

- Wage and earning statement(s) Form W-2, W-2G, 1099-R, from all employers.
- Interest and dividend statements from banks (Forms 1099).
- A copy of last year's federal and state returns if available.
- Bank routing numbers and account numbers for direct deposit.
- Everything saying "important tax document" on it.
- Rent paid out-of-pocket, landlord's name(s) and address or 2013 property taxes and the home's taxable value.
- Home heating costs reported on the December – March utility bills.

The program will also offer an alternative method to e-file for free. Taxpayers whose income does not exceed \$58,000 can prepare and e-file their own federal and state taxes for FREE using H&R Block software by visiting taxhelp.davenport.edu and connecting through the MyFreeTaxes.com link on the left side of the page. Anyone who wishes to prepare their own taxes but needs help getting started may visit one of the Davenport University Grand Rapids campuses and prepare their own taxes with the assistance of a tax coach.

To schedule an appointment, call 616-871-6147 or visit <http://taxhelp.davenport.edu>.

These free services are available at these locations and times:

Davenport University W.A. Lettinga Campus (FSA site)

6191 Kraft Ave. SE, Rm 222
 Grand Rapids, MI 49512
 Jan. 24 – April 5, 2014
 Fridays: 5 – 9 p.m.
 Saturdays: 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Davenport University Peter C. Cook Center (Downtown Grand Rapids-FSA site)

45 Ottawa Ave., Rm 101
 Grand Rapids, MI 49503
 Jan. 23 – April 10, 2014
 Thursdays: 5:30 – 9:30 p.m.
 Saturdays: 9 a.m. - Noon

ACSET Community Action Tax Center

121 Franklin St. SE
 Grand Rapids, MI 49507
 Jan. 20 – April 16, 2014
 Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
 Wednesdays: 4 - 8 p.m.

The Source

1409 Buchanan SW
 Grand Rapids, MI 49507
 Jan. 27 – April 12, 2014
 Mondays: 6 - 9 p.m.
 Saturdays: 9 a.m. - Noon

Kentwood Public Library

4950 Breton Rd SE
 Grand Rapids, MI 49508

Jan. 25 – April 5, 2014
Saturdays: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Wyoming Public Library

3350 Michael Ave SW
Wyoming, MI 49509
Jan. 29 – April 9, 2014
Wednesdays: 2 -6 p.m.
Saturdays: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Hope Network

775 36th St.
Wyoming, MI 49548
Jan. 27 – April 11, 2014
Wednesdays: 10 a.m.-Noon
Friday: 10 a.m.-4p.m.

Lamont Christian School

5260 Leonard St
Coopersville, MI 49404
Feb. 3 – April 14, 2014
Mondays: 6 - 9 p.m.
Saturdays: 9 a.m. - Noon

Hastings Public Library

227 E State St
Hastings, MI 49058
Saturdays: Feb 1, 15, 20; Mar. 1, 15; Apr. 5; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Wednesdays: Feb. 5, 19; Mar. 5, 26; Apr. 2, 9; 4:30-8 p.m.

Hope College, Martha Miller Center

141 East 12th St, Rm 240
Holland, MI 49423
Feb. 19 - April 1, 2014
Select Wednesdays: 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Davenport University Holland Campus (FSAS site)

643 S Waverly Rd, Rm 204
Holland, MI 49423
Feb. 1 – April 15, 2014
Saturdays: 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Davenport University Kalamazoo Campus

4123 West Main St
Kalamazoo, MI 49006
Feb. 14 – April 11, 2014
Select Thursdays: 3 -7 p.m.

Plainfield Senior Center

5255 Grand River Dr NE

Plainfield Township, MI 49525
Feb. 6 – March 27, 2014
Thursdays: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Aquinas College Library
159 Woodward Ln, Library
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
Jan. 28 – April 9, 2014
Tuesdays: 5-8 p.m.
Saturdays: 9 a.m.-12p.m.

Putnam District Library
327 N. Maine
Nashville, MI 49073
Tuesday, Feb. 11: 3-8 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 10; March 3: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Thursday, March 20: 4:15-8 p.m.

Delton District Library
330 N. Grove St.
Delton, MI 49046
Friday, Feb. 7 & 28: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Tuesday, March 11: 3-7 p.m.

St. Alphonsus Parish
224 Carrier St. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Feb. 1 – April 10, 2014
Thursdays: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; 5-8 p.m.
Saturdays: 9 a.m.-Noon

To schedule an appointment, call 616-871-6147 or visit <http://taxhelp.davenport.edu>.

About Davenport University

Founded in 1866, Davenport is a private, non-profit university serving nearly 10,000 students at campuses across Michigan and online. With tuition among the lowest of all private universities in the state, Davenport provides high academic quality, small class sizes, conveniently located campuses, faculty with real-world experience and more than 50 dynamic undergraduate and graduate programs addressing in-demand careers in business, technology and health professions. More information is available at www.davenport.edu.

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