



*Transforming People  
and Communities*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**VITA Volunteers.jpg**

CAP Services' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program volunteers include, from left, Yishen Yu, Zackery Hintz, Elizabeth Kaminski, Yingying Fu, Liane Schroeder, Melinda Kroening, Edison Kispert, Conner Dougherty, Jessica Wagner, Aaron Swanson, Winnie Darrow, Nathan Wetzel, Kely Rodriguez, John Gardner, Siyo Young, Caleb Olson, Edward Zyhowski and Thomas Matuka.

**CAP Services' Free Tax Assistance tops \$1.3 million in area returns**

This past tax season, CAP Services' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA) served 869 households within the program's service area of Portage, Waupaca, and Waushara counties. The program's 48 volunteers helped eligible taxpayers claim a total of more than \$1.3 million in state and federal tax refunds.

"In addition to being great for our local economy and the individuals served by this program, these results speak volumes about the exceptional skill and dedication of our volunteers," said Erin Olson of CAP Services. "The VITA program requires a combination of technical knowledge and interpersonal skill, as well as a great deal of flexibility in addressing each unique tax situation."

VITA helps individuals and families maximize their tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation and inform taxpayers about special tax credits for which they may qualify, such as the Child Tax Credit, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and Wisconsin's Homestead Credit.

“The EITC continues to be one of the most significant resources available to low-income families,” said Olson. “Many do not claim this and other credits due to lack of information or access.”

One third of the households served by CAP claimed EITC, for an average credit of \$1,500 per household.

The annual federal tax refund is the largest sum of cash many American households receive all year, often amounting to up to 20% of annual household income. In addition to helping cover basic household expenses, a family’s tax refund also offers a chance to put some money into savings.

In Portage County, 21 volunteers assisted 257 households through in-person appointments. An additional 111 households accessed free filing through MyFreeTaxes.com. Total state and federal refunds were \$639,417 and filers saved an estimated \$68,635 in preparation fees.

In Waupaca County, 10 volunteers assisted 163 households through in-person appointments. An additional 72 accessed free filing through MyFreeTaxes.com. Total state and federal refunds were \$347,267 and filers saved an estimated \$44,215 in preparation fees.

In Waushara County, 17 volunteers assisted 222 households through in-person appointments. An additional 44 households accessed free filing through MyFreeTaxes.com. Total state and federal refunds were \$323,892 and filers saved an estimated \$52,170 in preparation fees.

VITA partners include the IRS, Community Foundation of Central Wisconsin, Waupaca Area Community Foundation, Huntington National Bank, National Exchange Bank Foundation, Mid-State Technical College, and United Way of Portage County.

CAP Services, Inc. is a private, nonprofit community action agency that has been advancing social and economic justice for people and communities in Marquette, Outagamie, Portage, Waupaca and Waushara counties since 1966.

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