



NEWS RELEASE

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LOCAL COLLEGE STUDENTS OFFER FREE TAX FILING ASSISTANCE

Many low- and middle- income families qualify for free e-filing

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Feb. 1, 2012 – 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 \$50,000 in total family income) at locations across West Michigan.

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. In addition to students from Davenport University, students at Aquinas College, Cornerstone University and Hope College are participating in the program.

“This volunteer effort gives students a chance to gain some real-world work experience with actual clients while also benefiting those who need assistance completing their tax returns,” said Deb Kiss, Department Chair for accounting and finance at Davenport University.

In 2012, the free tax preparation service will be available at 11 different sites across West Michigan, including Davenport University’s Peter C. Cook Center in downtown Grand Rapids and its W.A. Lettinga and Holland Campuses. 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, social security numbers for spouse and 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 information and landlord’s name(s) or 2010 taxable value of their home and property taxes.

The program will also be offering a new alternative method to e-file for free. Called the **FAST** or FreeFile program, clients can come to designated **FAST** sites and prepare their own taxes with the assistance of a tax coach. Clients can choose from three popular tax software options, including TaxSlayer, H&R Block TaxCut and Intuit's TurboTax. The nice feature about this program is that people can efile state taxes for free and the income limits are higher. People whose income is \$57,000 or less can take advantage of this method.

These free services are available at these locations and times:

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

45 Ottawa Ave., Rm 101
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Jan. 23 – April 17, 2012
Tuesdays: 5 - 9 p.m.
Saturdays: 9 a.m. - Noon

Davenport University W.A. Lettinga Campus (FAST** site)**

6191 Kraft Ave. SE, Rm 222
Grand Rapids, MI 49512
Jan. 27 – April 14, 2012
Fridays: 4:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Saturdays: 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Davenport University Holland Campus (FAST** site)**

643 S Waverly Rd, Rm 204
Holland, MI 49423
Jan. 27- April 13, 2012
Fridays: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

ACSET Community Action Tax Center (FAST** site)**

121 Franklin St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507
Jan. 23 - April 17, 2012
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Wednesdays: 4 - 8 p.m.

The Source

1409 Buchanan SW
Grand Rapids, MI 49507
Jan. 23 – April 14, 2012
Mondays: 6 - 9 p.m.
Thursdays: 1 – 7 p.m.
Saturdays: 9 a.m. - Noon

Kentwood Public Library

4950 Breton Rd SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508
Jan. 28 – April 14, 2012
Saturdays: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Wyoming City Hall

1155 28th St SW

Wyoming, MI 49509
Jan. 24 - April 17, 2012
Tuesdays: Noon - 4 p.m.

Hope Network

775 36th St.
Wyoming, MI 49548
Jan. 27 - April 13, 2012
Fridays: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Lamont Christian School

5260 Leonard St
Coopersville, MI 49404
Jan. 30 - April 14, 2012
Mondays: 6 - 9 p.m.
Saturdays: 9 a.m. - Noon

Hastings Public Library

227 E State St
Hastings, MI 49058
Jan. 28 – April 7, 2012
Saturday: 9 a.m. - Noon; Feb 11; Apr 7
Saturday: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Jan. 28; Feb. 25; March 10, 24

Hope College, Martha Miller Center

141 East 12th St, Rm 240
Holland, MI 49423
Jan. 26 - April 12, 2012
Thursdays: 7 - 9 p.m.
Saturdays: 9 - 11 a.m.

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 with campuses across Michigan and online courses serving an enrollment of nearly 13,000 students. 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 40 dynamic undergraduate and graduate programs addressing in-demand careers. More information is available at www.davenport.edu.

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