VITA e³

A **V**olunteer **I**ncome **T**ax **A**ssistance program for schools with an emphasis on **e**-file, **e**ducation, and volunteer **e**xperience

Does your school have a community service requirement for graduates?

Are you looking for a way to connect tax education to the real world?

Is your school interested in giving back to your community through a community outreach effort?

Are your students struggling with much-needed life skills, such as filing their tax returns?

If you answered "yes" to any of the questions above, we have the program for you!

The IRS is looking for a few good schools to host a VITA/e-file site during the tax filing season. This program offers basic income tax preparation assistance for individuals of low- to moderate-income, individuals with disabilities, non-English speaking taxpayers, and the elderly within the community. Your students and other volunteers will be trained to help prepare basic tax returns **electronically** by working through modules on their own or by attending a classroom-like session.

e-file Makes It Easier!

Filing tax returns electronically is quick, easy, convenient, and safe. It also ensures a more accurate filing and reduces the time it takes to get a refund. That's why the IRS has made getting the e-file word out its number one priority. When you participate in the VITA e³ program you are:

- offering a much-needed service to your community, which extends the value of your school to the community.
- providing your students with real-life applications of skills learned in the classroom.
- developing skills that students will use for the rest of their lives.

VITA e³ also

- offers an excellent opportunity to satisfy community service requirements that your students may have to meet.
- can be integrated to support national and state curriculum standards.
- provides possible teacher development opportunities.
- fosters the development of "intangibles"—empathy and personal values.

Wanted: A Few Good Schools

Any schools using "Understanding Taxes" and "Taxes & You" or sponsors of school clubs, such as the National Honor Society, are great potential VITA/e-file sites. The IRS is also looking for schools that are innovative, enthusiastic, committed, and supportive. Schools should also be technologically advanced with current hardware, Internet access, and solid tech support.

A Level of Commitment

VITA e^3 is extremely flexible. Your school chooses its level of commitment. Your school decides

- what types of returns you'll process. Do you want to stick with the basics—1040EZ and 1040A—or do you want something more challenging, such as 1040 and related schedules?
- who you'll train. Do you want to train specially selected students from a class, a club, or other group? Do you want to include faculty or other community volunteers?
- how you'll train. The IRS offers a variety of training materials. You can have your volunteers work through modules on their own, or you can offer a classroom-like session.
- when the site will be open. Do you want to offer your services during or after school hours? On weekends? You could designate two or three "Super Saturdays" to process forms.
- whom will you serve. Do you want to process student returns only, or will you offer the services to qualifying faculty or staff? You may choose to offer your site's services to the entire community.

The choice is yours! One adult volunteer (administration, faculty, or community member) is needed to serve as the site coordinator, working closely with the IRS in the site's setup and operation.

Support for Your School

The IRS is available to support your endeavor. The IRS will supply

- self-paced training modules for tax preparers with IRS guidance and support as needed.
- a step-by-step guide that describes the mechanics of setting up a volunteer site.
- ongoing support from IRS Tax Specialists.

The Next Step

Interested in learning more about VITA e^3?
Call your IRS Tax Specialist at _____
at your local SPEC territory office for more information or to set up a meeting on how your school can become a VITA/e-file site.