

CBT Makes Free Tax Preparation Available

The Northeastern State University Broken Arrow campus community and members of its surrounding communities will have the option of obtaining free tax preparation through an NSU partnership with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program.

For individuals who qualify as having low-to-moderate income from \$60,000 and below, certified, trained volunteers will be available by appointment to prepare basic tax returns on both the state and federal level.

In addition, those who would like to file their own taxes online can access the necessary tax software for free. NSU's partnership with MyFreeTaxes provides easy, self-guided federal and state tax preparation for those with income of \$60,000 or less. The tax filing software is provided by H&R Block at www.myfreetaxes.com for individuals who will be able to access their taxes and returns from anywhere there is Internet access.

"Last year the VITA program prepared almost 600 tax returns for low to moderate income taxpayers at the Broken Arrow location," said Justin Halpern, professor of accounting. "The VITA program is one of NSU's most valuable community services. For many members of our community, their tax refund is the largest amount of cash they receive every year and VITA makes it possible for them avoid paying a large amount of their refund to commercial tax preparation services."

While the central location to receive assistance is at Broken Arrow, the service is not exclusive to those community members.

"VITA is open to anyone who meets the income limitations. We have people coming from all over the Tulsa area, Muskogee and even Tahlequah," Halpern added.

The tax preparation services will begin Jan. 25 and conclude on April 18, with the exception of spring break from March 14-20. The VITA Lab on the Broken

Arrow campus is open on Mondays and Thursdays from 5:30-7:45 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. in room 118 of the library building.

Appointments are strongly recommended and can be made by calling Community Action (CARD) at 918-486-2471, however walk-ins will be served if time permits.

Those seeking assistance with tax preparation should come prepared with the following:

- Photo proof of identification
- Physical copy of Social Security Card for you, your spouse and dependents and/or Social Security Number verification letter issued by the Social Security Administration
- Birth dates for you, your spouse and dependents on the tax return
- Wage and earning statements, Form W-2, W-2G, 1099-R, from all employers
- Interest and dividend statements from banks (Form 1099)
- A copy of last year's Federal and State Tax returns, if available
- Bank Routing Number and Account Number for Direct Deposit
- Payment made to day care providers including tax identification number of the day care provider (provider's Social Security Number or business Employer Identification Number)
- All documents issued that state "furnished to the IRS"
- Any documents that deal with health insurance coverage, 1095-A, 1099-SSA, exemption certificates, etc.
- To file taxes electronically for "married filing joint" tax return, both spouses must be present to sign the required forms

For more information, contact Bruce McDaniel at 918-449-6517 or mcdani15@nsuok.edu.

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