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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **Let Rappahannock United Way Help You File With A Smile this Tax Season!**

**Fredericksburg, VA:** People who work but don't earn a lot of money may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit, as well as free help preparing their tax return.

Rappahannock United Way has opened more FREE tax sites than ever before to assist low income workers. There will be at least 6 tax sites open to the general public, and several one time events held at different locations throughout tax season.

Tax sites this year are Thurman Brisben Center, Virginia Employment Commission, Rappahannock Goodwill Industries, Central Rappahannock Regional Library (Main and Porter Branches), and Rappahannock United Way. Tax sites opened January 19, 2010 and will remain open through April 15, 2010. Dates and times for each tax site will vary.

Additional sites at Garrison Woods, Stafford County Head Start and Hazel Hill Apartments will also be open to serve their clients and residents.

The dates and times that the tax sites are open vary from site to site, so people are encouraged to call the Rappahannock United Way (540) 373 0041 x316, to check hours of operation and to also get information on what documents you need to bring with you.

This tax season Rappahannock United Way has recruited almost double the number of volunteers they have had in the past, to meet the increased demand for FREE tax preparation services. Volunteer tax preparers are IRS certified and are ready to assist low income workers. Several volunteers are also Spanish speakers.

IRS estimates that up to 25% of eligible taxpayers fail to claim the credit which could put as much as \$5,666 into the pockets of a family with three children, or send as much as \$3,050 to a family with one child, or up to \$457 for a worker with no children.

“The extra dollars eligible taxpayers can get through EITC can make their lives a little easier,” said Sarah Walsh, Director of Community Investment at United Way, “but they must file tax returns, even if they aren't required to file, and claim the credit to receive it.”

Walsh said some individuals and families may qualify for the credit for the first time because of unemployment or other changes in their financial, marital or parental status during the past year.

Taxpayers with the earnings of or below \$43,352 (\$48,362 if married filing jointly) for families with three or more children; \$40,363 (\$45,373 married filing jointly) for families with two children; \$35,535 (\$40,545 married filing jointly) for families with one child or \$13,460 (\$18,470 married filing jointly) if there are no children should check to see if they qualify.

Rappahannock United Way will also partner with organizations such as Quin Rivers, Virginia Credit Union, Wachovia and Union Bank & Trust to provide free credit reports and credit counseling at some tax events. This is an important part United Way's mission to provide a variety of financial stability services.

To mark National EITC Awareness Day Rappahannock United Way is partnering with several other community organizations and banking institutions to present a "National EITC Day" event on February, 6, 2010. This event, called Money Talks, will help to promote financial stability by providing participants with free credit reports and credit counseling, free tax preparation services, and presentations on different financial stability options available in our community.

This FREE event is open to the public – everyone is welcome. We are particularly excited about the financial education services being provided by a new partner Virginia Credit Union. Topics will include 'how to eliminate debt' and 'understanding your credit score'.

Rappahannock United Way plans to hold additional financial stability events each month during tax season.

"We encourage everyone to stop by." Said Walsh, "this is a great opportunity to get your taxes done, receive one-on-one confidential credit counseling, or to just ask questions and gather information – all in one place."

**For more information about these events:**

**Call (540) 373-0041 x316 or Logon to [www.rappahannockunitedway.org](http://www.rappahannockunitedway.org)**

**Additional Information:**

**Rappahannock United Way** is a registered nonprofit organization dedicated to the mission of improving lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community.

**Virginia Credit Union** provides affordable banking services to its more than 190,000 member-owners and is a leading provider of financial education in the communities it serves. Eligible members include employees of Virginia's state and local governments, anyone who lives, works, or attends school in the City of Fredericksburg, as well as employees and family members from other approved groups. Visit [www.vacu.org](http://www.vacu.org) to learn more.