



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** – January 19, 2017

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## **PREPARING AND FILING TAXES – RAPPAHANNOCK UNITED WAY OFFERS IN-PERSON AND ONLINE HELP AT NO COST!**

**FREDERICKSBURG, VA** – Everyone knows that taxes are due in April, but did you know that you can file your taxes for free right here in Fredericksburg starting today? Rappahannock United Way (RUW) offers no-cost tax preparation services that help eligible taxpayers in Caroline, Fredericksburg, King George, Spotsylvania and Stafford save money at tax time. IRS-certified volunteers are on hand at Rappahannock United Way’s eight free tax sites to help taxpayers prepare and file their returns at no cost.

RUW has worked to empower households to emerge from poverty and achieve greater financial stability for decades. Last year, RUW worked with more than 100 volunteers to help over 1,900 Virginians make the most of their returns and get the refunds they deserved. RUW also helped save more than \$385,200 in tax preparation fees and secured over \$1.9 million in total refunds.

Now that tax time is here, taxpayers who made \$64,000 or less in 2016 who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns can come in to one of Rappahannock United Way’s tax sites to receive free income tax return preparation.

“Taxpayers are able to visit us at any of our tax sites to get the assistance they need to file their taxes at no cost,” said Stephanie Blair, Financial Stability Manager at Rappahannock United Way. “To file taxes on your own, we also offer a FREE IRS online filing program as another option to ensure you receive all the credits and deductions you deserve. Visit our website for details [www.RUWFreeTaxes.org](http://www.RUWFreeTaxes.org).”

Tax payers claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) or the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) should be aware that this year a new law requires the IRS to delay issuing refunds until February 15. The law has no exceptions and is designed to make it easier for the IRS to find and stop fraud. Once their taxes have been filed, tax payers can track their refund at [www.IRS.gov/refunds](http://www.IRS.gov/refunds). “We are encouraging tax payers to be weary of preparers promising faster refunds through expensive financial products,” said Blair. “We are dedicated to helping people get their maximum refund to use on necessities, like paying bills, paying down debt, making critical purchases and saving.”

Also new this year, returning Rappahannock United Way tax clients can avoid waiting in line by making an appointment. Limited appointments are available on Thursdays from 4-8 p.m. at the Rappahannock United Way tax site at 3310 Shannon Park Drive. To schedule an appointment call Rappahannock United Way at 540-373-0041 ext. 300. These appointments will also include a free financial coaching session in addition to tax preparation services.

Rappahannock United Way is proud to offer financial empowerment services to help more people create and reach financial goals. Anyone visiting the Rappahannock United Way free tax site this tax season can receive a free copy of their credit report, as well as meet with a trained financial coach to better understand their finances, make goals for the years ahead and take control of their financial lives. Financial coaching appointments can also be made by calling Rappahannock United Way at 540-373-0041 ext. 300.

For more information on tax services and financial counseling offered by Rappahannock United Way, please visit [www.RUWFreeTaxes.org](http://www.RUWFreeTaxes.org) or email Stephanie Blair at [sblair@rappahannockunitedway.org](mailto:sblair@rappahannockunitedway.org).

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