

VITA
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) volunteers provide FREE Income Tax Preparation Assistance to low-income, elderly, disabled and limited English speaking people. Volunteers get FREE classroom training and certification by the IRS after satisfactorily completing an open book exam.

The definition of low-income changes from year to year and from site to site, and for 2009 (i.e. 2008 Tax Season) it is approximately \$50,000 for each return. The level and intensity of training is less than that for paid preparers, and the issues faced by VITA volunteers are generally different from those of paid preparers.

Depending on their level of certification, volunteers are taught to correctly identify filing status, and to prepare returns with wages, tips, interest, dividends, unearned income, social security and retirement income, and self-employed income for Schedule C-EZ. Filing in Schedules C, D, and E are not part of the training or requirement for VITA volunteers, but certain sites may be able to help with such returns, provided it does not become an exercise in adding up long rows of numbers.

VITA has been serving Oklahoma City Community College since 1994. From doing all filing with paper forms and pencils to all filings are now electronically submitted using laptop computers. For the 2008 tax season VITA was on campus beginning February 1, 2009 through April 15, 2009, with hours of operation Monday-Thursday, 10:00 a.m – 2:00 p.m. On most days participants began placing their name on the sign-in list at 7 a.m. and volunteers would have to stop the signing-in process at noon in order to complete the returns on the same day.

VITA serves a very diverse population, including permanent residents and immigrants representing approximately 15 different countries/cultures. Many students, faculty and staff take advantage of the program with most participants coming from the community at large. This year 6 volunteers filed 848 income tax returns.

List of volunteers in spring 09:

- 1 OCCC international student Oxana Besova, from Russia
- 1 Walmart pharmacist
- 1 Retired navy submariner
- 1 Retired federal employee
- 1 Realtor (she drove in from Yukon)
- 1 Retired government employee, currently serves as tribal treasurer for their casino operation

Below is a list of those served during the corresponding tax year.

<u>Tax Year</u>	<u># Served</u>
2008	848
2007	871
2006	1093
2005	Not Available
2004	872