



United Way of Anchorage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Free Tax Prep Event at Mountain View Library

United Way collaboration eases tax time stress

Anchorage AK – Tax season is upon us. By and large it's not the most wonderful time of the year, but that dreaded Form 1040 might pencil out better than you think.

United Way of Anchorage is again co-sponsoring, with AARP Foundation Tax Aide, Free Tax Prep in Anchorage six days a week at [nine sites](#) in the Anchorage area from Chugiak to Girdwood.

On Saturday, Feb. 22, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mountain View Library will host a Free Tax Prep event. The Mountain View event will include free tax preparation by IRS-certified Tax Aide volunteers -- and computer stations for do-it-yourselfers to file free online at MyFreeTaxes.com. People filing their own taxes will have the benefit of tax coaches on hand to help.

Filing taxes can be confusing, frustrating and intimidating. Free Tax Prep eases the stress with expertise and results you can bank.

The numbers testify. In 2019, 3,758 residents saved \$751,600 in tax prep fees by working with AARP Foundation Tax Aide volunteers. And that's just for starters.

Free Tax Prep brought home more than \$4 million in refunds in 2019, along with \$889,649 in Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

All of that was a boost to families and the Anchorage economy.

We count that boost in nine figures over 20 years. Since 2000, Free Tax Prep has logged \$133,451,558 in total refunds. So when we say your taxes might pencil out better than you think, we've got the numbers to back it up.

What difference do these numbers make? One example: In 2019, an Anchorage man with two young daughters was sheltering night to night in Anchorage churches in the Emergency Cold Weather Shelter system and living out of his car. He was waiting on his tax refund for an apartment deposit. Free Tax Prep can help to speed that process for families and individuals in need – and get the maximum return for families to keep them out of that bind in the first place.

A woman who, at the suggestion of friends, underreported her income, found that an accurate return for her cleaning business received a refund of about \$7,000, much of it due to the Earned Income Tax Credit.

H&R Block estimates that 1 in 5 taxpayers who would qualify for the credit – refundable even if they don't owe taxes – don't apply for it because it can be complicated. And the extra work costs more at a paid tax prep service. Free Tax Prep volunteers can take care of any complexity and charge nothing.

This is powerful, practical help for Anchorage families to gain and keep financial stability.

Following this Saturday event is America Saves Week – February 24-29. Encouraging people to set financial goals and then figure out what it will take to reach them is the focus of the week. A slice of any tax refund that flows from Saturday’s work can power a personal pledge to save at AlaskaSaves.org.

Savers hold themselves accountable for following through with their pledge promises, and America Saves provides full access to saving strategies, budget worksheets, everyday savings tips and more—all for free.

“People are often focused on financial decisions during tax time; America Saves Week encourages people not to miss this opportunity to save,” said Jane Straight, United Way’s director of income and health impact. “Setting even a very small amount aside reinforces a savings mindset – and this can make a big difference over time.”

More information – and what documents to bring for tax prep – is available at FreeTaxPrepANC.com and at Alaska 2-1-1 or 1-800-478-2221.

About United Way of Anchorage

United Way of Anchorage is a community of donors, advocates, volunteers, and partners who fight for the health, education and financial stability of every person in our community. LIVE UNITED.

www.LiveUnitedANC.org