



BEAUFORT COUNTY News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 11, 2015

Contact:

Mark Schneider
VITA Program Coordinator
843-906-9465

VITA of the Lowcountry Sees Demand Surge for Free Tax Preparation Program Services

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) of the Lowcountry, a program of Together for Beaufort County, is struggling to meet a tremendous and unexpected surge in the demand for its free income tax preparation services this year. The program, which is intended to aid low to moderate income individuals and families, has witnessed a staggering increase in the volume of clients seeking services, since commencing operations early last week.

VITA Program Coordinator Mark Schneider stated, "We have been simply overwhelmed by the large volume of area residents seeking VITA's free tax preparation services during the first week of our tax filing season operations. We also experienced numerous technological and administrative challenges. The fact that our volunteers managed to e-file more than 200 federal returns this past week really is impressive."

Schneider urges area residents to be patient and to wait several weeks, if possible, for the initial surge of clients to slow before they go to sites, which will be open until mid-April, allowing plenty of time to meet the tax filing deadline of April 15.

"Every year, when VITA first opens its sites there is a tremendous rush of those who want to get in fast and get their taxes prepared and filed as quickly as possible," Schneider said. "Unfortunately, when this happens we experience very long lines of clients, many of whom have to be turned away because we simply do not have enough time or the necessary number of certified volunteer tax preparers to serve them."

Visit www.vitalowcountry.org for more information about the program and to view the tentative daily schedule and list of tax preparation sites. Qualifying taxpayers can also visit www.myfreetaxes.com to prepare their income taxes independently for free.

