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## Press release : 2010 : 03 : 08 : Accounting Students Help Community with Free Tax Service

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## Accounting Students Help Community with Free Tax Service

Posted [March 8, 2010](#) at 8:06 am by [Melanie Marquez](#)

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(St. Petersburg, Fla.) March 8, 2010 – Through their work with the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, or VITA program, USFSP accounting students have prepared more than 700 tax returns, generating more than \$1.2 million in tax refunds for local residents.

The 29 students, some serving as interns and others as volunteers, work at 12 VITA sites throughout Pinellas County, from the Sanderlin Family Center in Midtown St. Petersburg to the Union Academy Family Center in Tarpon Springs.

The VITA program helps low- and moderate-income families prepare their 2009 year tax returns. The students help residents file for the earned income tax credit or the child tax credit if they qualify.

Supervising and working alongside the students is James Fellows, Bank of America Professor in the USFSP College of Business.

“By April 15, the end of tax season, I expect the students will have completed more than 1,000 returns,” Fellows said. “That will earn families approximately \$2 million in tax refunds.”

The IRS partners with the Pinellas County Wealth Building Coalition, the non-profit organization that provides the sites for the tax preparation. Students undergo training and receive certification from the IRS as tax preparers.

Fellows teaches tax classes at USFSP. He has been a faculty member at USF St. Petersburg since 1992 and was named the 2005 Educator of the Year by the Florida Institute of Public Accountants.

The College of Business at USFSP is accredited by AACSB International – The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. The Program of Accountancy is separately accredited through AACSB, giving the college a dual accreditation held by only three percent of business schools its size.

For more information about the IRS VITA program, please contact James Fellows at [fellows@mail.usf.edu](mailto:fellows@mail.usf.edu). For more information about the Program of Accountancy, please click [here](#).

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