



Contact:

Tami Kelly

Brazer Communications for United Way Bay Area

925-640-9997 | [mediarelations@uwba.org](mailto:mediarelations@uwba.org)

## **United Way Launches 15<sup>th</sup> Season of Free Tax Preparation for Low-Income Residents**

*Community Free Tax Preparation Program a Gateway to California Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)*

**SAN FRANCISCO, February 9, 2017**—For the 15th year, low- to moderate-income residents in the Bay Area can have their taxes prepared for free through **United Way Bay Area’s Earn It! Keep It! Save It!** program. More than 250 free tax preparation sites across eight counties are ready to help families access the California **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)**, which leverages the federal EITC in the communities that need it the most. Bay Area taxpayers can learn more and find a location near them by: dialing 211 or visiting [earnitkeepitsaveit.org](http://earnitkeepitsaveit.org)

“The Earned Income Tax Credit is the most effective anti-poverty tool this country has,” said Kelly Batson, United Way Bay Area Vice President of Operations, “and United Way is proud to lead this local coalition and support the work of 3,000+ volunteers, changing lives one tax return at a time. In addition to the tax refunds, we are saving families and individuals millions of dollars in tax preparation fees.”

With the support of trained, IRS-certified volunteer tax preparers, Earn It! Keep It! Save It! sites provide free tax preparation to individuals and families earning less than \$54,000 per year. Volunteers help taxpayers receive the best possible refunds by ensuring that they claim all of the deductions and tax credits available to them.

For example, the federal EITC—one of the most powerful poverty-fighting, safety net programs in the country—can provide eligible families with three or more qualifying children a \$6,269 credit. The Brookings Institute estimates that the EITC kept 6.2 million Americans out of poverty annually between 2011 and 2013, including 747,000 Californians.

For the second year, the California Earned Income Tax Credit is available to the most poor, vulnerable households in the state. Some may be eligible for more than \$5,000 when they claim both the federal and state EITC, even if they do not have a tax filing requirement.

Last year, thanks to the support of more than 3,000 volunteers and the generosity of United Way Bay Area donors and partners, Earn It! Keep It! Save It! helped secure \$80 million in tax refunds for over 74,000 Bay Area households. More than \$26 million of these refunds came in the form of Earned Income Tax Credits. Over the past 15 years, community partners and volunteers have returned over \$600 million in refunds to Bay Area households.

**Bay Area taxpayers can learn more and find a free tax site near them by: dialing 211 | visiting [earnitkeepitsaveit.org](http://earnitkeepitsaveit.org)**

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**About United Way Bay Area**

United Way Bay Area is a nonprofit organization leading a movement to end the cycle of Bay Area poverty. We're harnessing the collective power of nonprofits, government, corporations, labor and thousands of individuals to create change through giving, advocacy and volunteering. Every year, our programs help more than 250,000 Bay Area residents. We connect people to food and shelter, put people back to work, bring tax dollars back to our community, help youth succeed in school and in the workplace, and move people toward financial stability. Founded in 1922, United Way Bay Area serves Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano Counties.

**Learn more: [uwba.org](http://uwba.org)**