



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS ADVISORY

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COUNTY HELPS FAMILIES FILE TAXES; APPLY FOR CALFRESH \$7.2 Million Returned to San Diegans by EITC Campaign in 2010

WHAT: County officials and community partners kick off the 2011 countywide campaign to help more San Diego County, low-income families and individuals take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and apply for CalFresh (food stamps).

During the campaign, hundreds of volunteers will offer free tax preparation services at dozens of sites throughout the county and screen families to determine if they qualify for CalFresh. Residents should call 2-1-1 San Diego for information.

WHO: **Supervisor Pam Slater-Price**, District 3, County of San Diego Board of Supervisors
Nick Macchione, Director, County Health and Human Services Agency
Ron Wicks, Internal Revenue Service
Shaina Gross, United Way of San Diego County

WHEN: **FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2011 AT 10:30 A.M.**

WHERE: **SAY San Diego**
4340 Genesee Ave. Suite 207—San Diego

WHY: About \$77 million EITC dollars are unclaimed by local residents, according to a 2010 report by New America Foundation. Nationally, the IRS estimates that between 20 and 25 percent of eligible individuals do not claim the credit.

During the 2003 tax season, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors launched a pilot program, spearheaded by Supervisor Slater-Price and Supervisor Greg Cox, which provided tax preparation assistance to low-income workers. The program was expanded countywide the following year.

In 2010, more than 38,000 federal and state tax returns were filed, bringing about \$22 million in refunds to working families and the local economy. Nearly \$7.2 million were EITC dollars.

Furthermore, last year, students from San Diego State University, Cal State San Marcos, San Diego Community College District and Southwestern College participated in the Thrive San Diego component of the EITC campaign. The students screened 415 families and individuals for "CalFresh" eligibility; of those, 138 completed applications to receive benefits.

Since the campaign began, more than \$36 million EITC dollars have been returned to local families.

Established in 1975, the EITC is the federal government's largest cash assistance program designed to lift low-income families and individuals out of poverty.

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