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NCUA Media Advisory

NCUA-IRS Expand VITA Program

Credit Unions Facilitate Access to over \$20 Million in Tax Refunds; Updated Partnership Planned

March 22, 2010, Alexandria, Va. – National Credit Union Administration Chairman Debbie Matz recently met with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Wage and Investment (W&I) Commissioner Richard E. Byrd, Jr., to discuss the importance and expansion of the IRS VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) partnership program. Credit unions have embraced VITA, demonstrated by last year's \$20.9 million in tax refunds received by credit union members who participated in free tax preparation services provided by credit unions partnering with the IRS program.



Chairman Debbie Matz, center, recently welcomed IRS W&I Commissioner Richard E. Byrd, Jr., and IRS Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication Director Julie Garcia to NCUA to discuss the IRS VITA Program. NCUA is one of IRS' national VITA partners, and NCUA plans to include news and information about the VITA program within the financial education program of its new Office of Consumer Protection.

“Credit unions are a reliable source of financial assistance and education for consumers, and VITA is a tangible complement to those efforts,” commented Chairman Matz. “I strongly encourage credit unions to not only make full use of IRS initiatives such as the VITA program, but also to seek VITA grants and offer no-cost financial counseling and education to members. VITA partnerships enhance credit union outreach, and I am proud of the joint efforts of NCUA and IRS in this important area.”

In 2009, 541 credit unions took part in the VITA partnership. Credit unions participating in the VITA program, in addition to offering free tax preparation and filing services by IRS-trained personnel, can also facilitate electronic refunds.

"The IRS is extremely proud to have NCUA as one of our national partners," said Commissioner Byrd, Commissioner of the Wage and Investment Division of IRS. "NCUA and the credit union industry are leaders in financial education and asset-building. Our collaboration is a natural fit and enables us to provide tax education and free tax preparation as well as help provide greater economic opportunities for taxpayers. We hope to continue this partnership, strengthening and expanding the reach among the over 7,500 federally insured credit unions across America," said Byrd.

Additionally, NCUA and IRS are working to reaffirm their long-standing relationship through a modification to the VITA Memorandum of Understanding with a renewed emphasis on the IRS Financial Education and Asset Building Program. The agreement would focus on the following:

- Assisting low-income persons and families to enhance their money management skills,
- Assisting low-income individuals to meet their tax obligations,
- Creating credit union relationships, and
- Using tax credits as funding sources for asset-building strategies.

The IRS offers a grant program open to VITA participants, NCUA also provides up to \$6,500 per credit union in grant funding for VITA program training, education and outreach efforts. In 2009, 23 credit unions secured \$120,400 in NCUA grants through the Community Development Revolving Loan Fund.

Credit unions will be notified about NCUA's 2011 VITA grant program within the next few months. Learn more about the IRS VITA grant program by going to [IRS VITA Grant Program](#) at [IRS.gov](#). And, learn more about the IRS VITA program, please contact the IRS/NCUA Relationship Manager contact Debra Chandler at Debra.Chandler@irs.gov.

The National Credit Union Administration is the independent federal agency that regulates charters and supervises federal credit unions. NCUA, with the backing of the full faith and credit of the U.S. government, also operates and manages the National

Credit Union Share Insurance Fund, insuring the deposits of 90 million account holders in all federal credit unions and the majority of state-chartered credit unions.

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