

## Student Volunteers at UC San Diego to Offer Income Tax Information, Help

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Getting in an early tizzy over filing income tax forms? Wondering where you can get help, advice, expertise?

The *Tax Outreach Program* at the University of California, San Diego aims to ease your journey through the income tax filing process, offering resources and assistance along the way to make the process run as smoothly and pain free as possible.

Beginning Feb. 15 and running through April 15, student volunteers at UC San Diego will make available tax publications, booklets, and forms and staff a tax hotline at (858) 822-2414. The hotline will offer referrals to area Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites, where help with preparing income tax forms is offered, as well as other Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and California Franchise Tax Board resources. The program also may be reached via e-mail at [taxinfo@ucsd.edu](mailto:taxinfo@ucsd.edu).

The UC San Diego *Tax Outreach Program* is sponsored by Student Legal Services, working closely with the IRS. It also will alert callers and e-mailers of workshops designed to offer general information to taxpayers and provide support for these workshops.

"The outreach program is open to the UC San Diego community and the San Diego community at large," says Jessica St. Clair, legal education coordinator for Student Legal Services. "We hope to be able to assist a wide range of students on campus and members of the community and to impress upon them the idea of starting income tax preparation early, avoiding a need to rush, and eliminating the frustration that procrastination always produces."

In the past, UC San Diego's VITA program's volunteers have assisted in preparation of tax returns on campus for qualifying individuals and families. St. Clair says this program is on hiatus this year due to resource restraints and that Student Legal Services continues to partner closely with the IRS.

"We look forward to bringing the VITA services back in the future, but for now, our student volunteers will assist a broader scope of the UC San Diego and San Diego community with resource information and referrals."

St. Clair says the students who volunteer with the *Tax Outreach Program* develop a variety of transferable skills, including problem solving, oral communication, customer service skills, marketing and outreach experience, as well as knowledge of income tax resources.

"This is a service to taxpayers," St. Clair says, "but also a learning experience for our students."

For the UC San Diego income tax hotline, call (858) 822-2414 after Feb. 15. To contact St. Clair, call (858) 534-4374 or e-mail [sls@ucsd.edu](mailto:sls@ucsd.edu).

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