



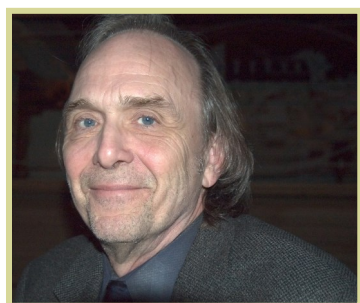
# Update: LUM Tax Assistance Recap

## LUM Tax Assistance Impacts Local Economy

For 12 years, the Lafayette Urban Ministry has partnered with the IRS Volunteers in Tax Assistance (VITA) Program to bring free, quality, tax return preparation services to hundreds of low-income wage earners in our community. This year, **1,920** joint and individual state and federal tax returns were prepared. More than **\$4.5 million** in tax refunds and tax credits were returned to local low-income households and funneled back into our local economy.



Almost **80 LUM volunteers** study each year and receive IRS certification to prepare tax returns. It's a big commitment of time and effort, but the payoff for volunteers is big too.



Lee Schwartz has volunteered at LUM for six tax seasons. Schwartz donates 30 hours of his time each week to the LUM Tax Assistance Program. Schwartz states,

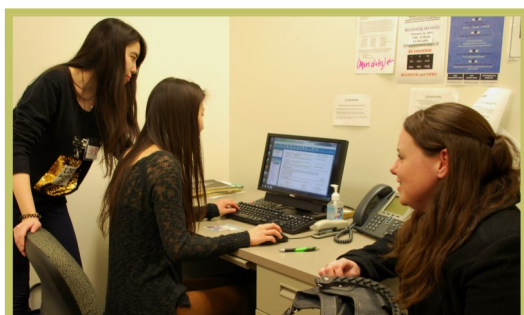
*"I enjoy helping people in such a real and tangible way. For some of my clients, a full one-third of their annual income comes from the tax refund we are able to secure for them through LUM. And because we don't charge for our service, low-income wage earners are much more likely to file their returns."*

Any married couple or individual who generally make \$53,000 or less in annual income is eligible to have their return prepared at LUM. The average 2013 adjusted gross income of those we served this year was only **\$16,189**.

The average refund for this year was **\$2,345**. With their refunds, the LUM tax assistance clients pay back bills, get caught up on their rent, purchase new clothes for their children, and even pay for tuition at IVY Tech. Some have even used it as down payment on the purchase of a home. Not only are the refunds important to the tax payer, but collectively they also add a significant boost to our local retail economy. When you consider the many jobs created and maintained by this sector, LUM's tax program has a significant multiplier effect as well.

LUM volunteer tax preparers consistently share that the best part about their volunteer work is that they gain a better understanding of the lives of low-income wage earners. Lee Schwartz states,

*"My stereotypes are challenged every time I come to LUM. I am amazed by how hard people work, how far they are able to stretch their limited dollars. It's a real eye opener."*



LUM Executive Director Joe Micon says that the income tax assistance program is probably the most significant thing LUM does each year in its mission to support working families and their children. Micon states,

*"The positive impact of these dollars cannot be understated."*

The 2014 LUM Tax Assistance Program is led by Sandra Dunn-El and Ron Smith. For more information on the LUM Income Tax Assistance Program, click [HERE](#).

## LUM Shelter receives \$15,000 grant



Earlier this week, LUM has received notice that the LUM emergency shelter has been awarded a Community Development Block Grant from the City of Lafayette for \$15,000. The grant will assist in the LUM homeless shelter operation expenses for the fiscal year of 2014-2015.

Our heartfelt thanks to the City of Lafayette for their continued support of the LUM emergency shelter. Thanks also to Joyce Fasani, LUM shelter director, for a great job at grant writing! For more information on the LUM emergency shelter, click [HERE](#).

## Faith Presbyterian—Emergency Aid Program

Faith Presbyterian Church (3318 SR 26 W, West Lafayette) has announced that their Emergency Aid Program has been resumed. In the past the Emergency Aid Program was a collaboration with Central Presbyterian Church for over 20 years.

The Emergency Aid Program is open the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday each month from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. or until the funds are depleted for the month. Assistance will be provided for rent and utility bills. Initially, clients will be eligible for up to \$40 per household, every 3 months; and the program will assist 18 families per month.

Faith Presbyterian Church is excited to offer this Emergency Aid Program and serve our community in this way again. For more information on the Emergency Aid Program at Faith Presbyterian Church, click [HERE](#).



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