



Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network

# Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Strategies for West Virginia



Charleston, West Virginia • January 20–21, 2005

## Agenda

### Day One: January 20, 2005

8:30 a.m.- 9:30 a.m.	<b>Registration</b>
9:00 a.m.-9:30 a.m.	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b>  <i>Charles R. Young, II, Assistant Commissioner, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources</i>  <i>Kenneth Martin, Ph.D., West Virginia University Extension Service</i>  <i>Larry Beckett, President, West Virginia Welfare Reform Coalition</i>  <i>John Horejsi, Federal Project Officer, Welfare Peer TA Network, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families</i></p> <p>This is West Virginia’s first statewide workshop on the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). This workshop will help build the capacity for communities to organize local initiatives and develop collaborative partnerships with public officials, civic and social service providers, employers, etc., to promote greater awareness of the Federal EITC and Child Tax Credits (CTC). These local efforts will enable low-income families to become financially independent and self-sufficient. These efforts will also significantly enhance the economy of local communities and promote the development of a stronger work force.</p>
9:30 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	<p><b>A Shared Vision for Community Economic Empowerment</b>  <i>David J. Lett, Regional Administrator, Administration for Children and Families, Philadelphia (Region III)</i></p> <p><b>Building Foundations for Family Financial Self-sufficiency. Why TANF is the Right Place to Target an EITC Initiative</b>  <i>David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families</i></p> <p>Participation of former Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) clients in the EITC and CTC programs are important elements for building financial self-sufficiency. However, research reveals that current and former TANF clients are less likely to participate in these programs. The studies also report that minorities are less likely to receive these program benefits. This presentation will highlight several successful HHS pilot projects and targeted outreach strategies that have enhanced the participation of TANF clients and minority communities in the tax credit programs. These innovative outreach strategies will enable communities to bring millions of dollars in unclaimed earned benefits into the local economy. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.</p>
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<b>Break</b>

**10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

**Workshop: Developing Community Partnerships**

*Facilitator: Allison Nichols, D.Ed, West Virginia University Extension Service*

**Cost-To-Impact: Tools for Tracking and Analyzing the Impact of EITC Initiatives**

*Susan Cocciarelli, Michigan State University Extension*

Quality data collection is critical to ascertaining the true impact of community based EITC initiatives. This session will share highlights from the first year of the Michigan statewide EITC initiative and provide an overview of the Cost-To-Impact (CTI) analysis tools designed for the project. The CTI analysis tools have been adopted as a model for EITC outreach by the National League of Cities. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.

**11:00 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.**

**Tax Assistance Partnerships and Volunteer Tax Assistance Site (VITA) Programs in West Virginia**

*Facilitator: John Horejsi, Federal Project Officer, Welfare Peer TA Network, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families*

**Partnerships in Outreach and Collaboration on the EITC**

*Sandra Trigg, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Territory Manager, Ohio and West Virginia*

The power of coalitions is a driving force in all communities. The IRS Territory Office, through the Stakeholder, Partnerships, Education, and Communication (SPEC) organization, provides critical support to communities engaged in EITC outreach initiatives. SPEC partners with communities and businesses in developing and implementing community-based partnerships to promote education, and awareness of Federal tax credits, free tax preparation services, and asset building opportunities. This session will share highlights on the program's mission, goals and operational support for local initiatives in West Virginia.

**New Resources for Rural Communities**

*Michael McBride, Chief, Educational Institutions and Government Partnerships, IRS*

The IRS' SPEC FY 05 Rural Outreach, Tax Return Preparation, and Financial Literacy Strategy outlines a plan of action that involves SPEC Offices and various partners utilizing rural pilots and models to deliver services to selected areas of low-income rural America. Information gathered from the FY 05 pilots is to be used to develop a national Rural Strategy for FY 06. Key to this strategy is the fact that it will utilize identification of, collaborate, and build alliances with groups that have extensive pre-existing rural infrastructures as a means of reaching even the most rural population. Equally important is the fact that partner organizations have extensive knowledge of other rural organizations. West Virginia is considered to be strategic partner in the IRS FY 05 Rural Strategy. A question and answer session will follow formal remarks from the two panelists.

**11:45 p.m. – 12:15 p.m.**

**Overview of West Virginia EITC Activities: Best Practices and Strategies**

*Facilitator: David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families*

*Elizabeth Damewood Lovas, West Virginia Welfare Reform Coalition*

*Devin McGrew, West Virginia Welfare Reform Coalition*

12:15 p.m. – 1:30p.m.

(Working session)

**New Opportunities for Developing Collaborative Partnerships on the EITC and CTC**

*Facilitator: Honorable Barbara Fleischauer, Former Delegate, Morgantown West Virginia*

**Working in Partnership with the Business Community**

*Lynn Mitchell, Policy Director, Corporate Voices for Working Families*

Businesses have a vested interest in supporting community EITC outreach initiatives and helping their employees learn about tax credits they are eligible to receive. Corporate Voices for Working Families has successfully developed EITC outreach partnerships with major business leaders to promote family stability and self-sufficiency. This session will highlight successful strategies for partnering with employers on EITC outreach initiatives. Corporate Voices for Working Families will also make the EITC Toolkit available for the business community. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.

1:30 p.m. – 1:40 p.m.

**Break**

1:40 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.

**Strategies for Building EITC Community Coalitions**

*Facilitator: Devin McGrew, West Virginia Welfare Reform Coalition*

*David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families*

Sharing innovative strategies for building local coalitions to promote EITC participation. Program models will reflect strategies from successful community outreach campaigns with detailed focus on the Jacksonville FL., Real Sense Prosperity Campaign, funded by United Way of North Florida. The Jacksonville project developed a broad-based, community-wide partnership between city officials, IRS, community organizations, and area business leaders. The coalition also secured the participation of faith-based leaders and the Hispanic community. The project included both an urban center and two rural communities. In the first year of operation, in 2004, The Real Sense Prosperity Campaign returned positive earnings (a ratio of 17:1) for net investment made on EITC outreach. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.

2:20 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Workshop: Developing a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Site**

*Facilitator: Robin Taylor, IRS Senior Tax Specialist, Atlanta, Georgia*

*Mike Beulike, IRS Senior Tax Specialist, West Virginia*

There are varied strategies to promote the availability of the EITC and CTC. Developing a VITA program is a resource available in some communities. Tools, resources and training modules facilitate the development and maintenance of a VITA program site. This session will review the IRS training resources to operate a VITA program, including online support resources. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.

3:00 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.

**Break**

3:10 p.m. – 3:40 p.m.

**Empowerment Through Financial Literacy**

*Facilitator: Marlo Scruggs, Community Relations Manager, Branch Banking & Trust, Committee Member, West Virginia Welfare Reform Coalition*

**Developing Financial Literacy: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Money Smart Program**

*John Meeks, Community Affairs Specialist, FDIC*

An introductory overview of the FDIC Money Smart Program, this session will focus on strategies for helping families to develop an understanding and vision for the future, empowering individuals and families to take financial control of their lives through financial literacy.

**3:40 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.**

**Resources for Developing Community Initiatives**

*Facilitator: Michael McBride, IRS SPEC, Manager Rural Strategy*

**Developing Local EITC Initiatives: Opportunities and Challenges for West Virginia**

*Maggie McCarthy, Executive Director, The Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation, Waco, Texas*

The Rapoport Foundation is a principal sponsor of the Heart of Texas Financial Literacy Coalition (HOTFLC). Ms. McCarthy, in collaboration with local faith-based organizations established the HOTFLC. This presentation will feature highlights of the HOTFLC media outreach strategy and will also include a review of training resources and toolkits available to assist communities organizing local outreach initiatives. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.

**4:10 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

**Organizing Regional Community Partnerships: Urban/Rural Breakout Session**

*Facilitator: David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families*

**Session Resource Team**

*Michael McBride, IRS SPEC, Manager Rural Strategy*

*Robin Taylor, IRS Senior Tax Specialist, Atlanta, GA*

*Diana Behm, Special Projects Manager, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency*

Small groups will work in teams based on urban vs. rural locations. Participants will self-select into the team most relevant to their work

**5:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.**

**Organizing Regional Community Partnerships: Regional Breakout Session**

*Facilitator: David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families*

**Session Resource Team**

*Michael McBride, IRS SPEC, Manager Rural Strategy*

*Robin Taylor, IRS Senior Tax Specialist, Atlanta, Georgia*

*Diana Behm, Special Projects Manager, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency*

Small groups will work in teams by region to develop local community outreach strategies. Teams will build on their own expertise to begin formulating strategies for an EITC initiative that is locally based, but scaleable to the State. Brainstorming and planning materials will be provided. Community project planning models, best practices and developing new ideas will be incorporated into the local area planning session.

**5:45 p.m.**

**Day 1 Adjournment**

**6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

**Networking Session**

*Host: West Virginia University Extension Service. More details will be provided at the conclusion of the Day 1 session.*

# Day Two: January 21, 2004

8:00 a.m. – 8:20 a.m.	<p><b>Building Local Initiatives: Community Project Planning</b>  <i>David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families</i></p>
	<p>This session will focus on strategies for meeting the needs of diverse stakeholders in order to support long-term partnerships. Included will be a discussion on ways to maximize local community resources, utilize guerilla marketing, and the Seven Points of Contact strategies. This session will also include the opportunity to ask questions about EITC outreach and project planning.</p>
8:20 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	<p><b>Developing Local EITC Initiatives: Action Planning</b>  <i>Facilitator: David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families</i></p>
	<p><b>Session Resource Team</b>  <i>Maggie McCarthy, Executive Director, The Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation, Waco, Texas</i>  <i>Michael McBride, IRS SPEC, Manager Rural Strategy</i>  <i>Robin Taylor, IRS Senior Tax Specialist, Atlanta, Georgia</i>  <i>Diana Behm, Special Projects Manager, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency</i></p>
	<p>Roundtable Planning Session: Regional teams will use their work from the previous day to refine and develop a local EITC and CTC outreach initiative. Teams will be supported by workshop faculty.</p>
9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<p><b>Concurrent Workshop Sessions</b>          (All participants will have the opportunity to attend each of the two workshops. Workshop assignments will be recorded on participant's badges.)</p>
<b>Blue Group</b>	<p><b>Workshop I: Overview of the Tax Wise Software System</b>  <i>Facilitator: Robin Taylor, IRS Senior Tax Specialist, Atlanta, Georgia</i>   <i>Ronald E. Young, IRS SPEC</i></p>
	<p>This session will include an introduction to the IRS Tax Wise software and online income tax filing process. It will include the usage of training modules.</p>
<b>Green Group</b>	<p><b>Workshop II: Developing A Mobile Multi-Community Outreach Project</b>  <i>Facilitator: David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance</i>   <i>Diana Behm, Special Projects Manager, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency</i></p>
	<p>Providing tax assistance to rural communities can be a challenge. This workshop will share information on strategies for developing and managing a Mobile Multi-Community Tax Filing Assistance Program. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.</p>
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	<b>Break</b>
10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	<b>Concurrent Workshops</b>
<b>Green Group</b>	<p><b>Workshop III: Overview of the Tax Wise Software System</b>  <i>Facilitator: Robin Taylor, IRS Senior Tax Specialist, Atlanta, Georgia</i>   <i>Ronald E. Young, IRS SPEC</i></p>
	<p>This session will include an introduction to the IRS Tax Wise software and online income tax filing process. It will also include computer-training modules. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.</p>

<p><b>Blue Group</b></p>	<p><b>Workshop IV: Developing A Mobile Multi-Community EITC and CTC Outreach Project</b>  <i>Facilitator: Pam Mills, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources</i></p> <p><i>Diana Behm, Special Projects Manager, Northeast Oklahoma Community Action Agency</i></p> <p>Providing tax assistance to rural communities can be a challenge. This workshop will share information on strategies for developing and managing a Mobile Multi-Community Tax Filing Assistance Program. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.</p>
<p><b>11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.</b></p> <p><b>(Working session)</b></p>	<p><b>EITC West Virginia Resources to Support Local Community Outreach Strategies</b>  <i>Facilitator: Michael McBride, IRS SPEC, Manager Rural Strategy</i></p> <p><i>Kay Tilton, Director, Division of Early Care and Education, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources</i>  <i>Bill Heubner, Director, Office of Head Start State Collaboration, Bureau for Children and Families</i>  <i>Pam Mills, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources</i></p> <p>The WVDHHR will share their EITC and CTC community initiative strategy. The initiative is designed to enhance the ability of West Virginia's most vulnerable families (TANF clients, Head Start families, and Food Stamp recipients) to access EITC benefits. The project also promotes local communities to undertake educational initiatives on the EITC and CTC. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.</p>
<p><b>12:30 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Working Roundtable: Building the Local Campaign</b>  <i>Facilitator: David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families</i></p> <p>Participants will collaborate on the development of their regional community strategies to promote the EITC and CTC. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.</p>
<p><b>1:10 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Review of the Developing New Community Initiatives</b>  <i>Facilitator: Kenneth Martin, Ph.D., West Virginia University Extension Service</i></p> <p>Regional planning teams will share strategies for enhancing and/or developing local community EITC and CTC initiatives. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.</p>
<p><b>2:10 p.m. -- 2:40 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Next Steps:</b>  <i>Facilitator: Mike McBride, IRS SPEC, Manager Rural Strategy</i></p> <p><i>Elizabeth Damewood Lovas, West Virginia Welfare Reform Coalition</i>  <i>Devin McGrew, West Virginia Welfare Reform Coalition</i></p> <p>Strategies for ongoing communication and technical assistance. Schedule future meetings and project year-end review session.</p>
<p><b>2:40 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Closing Remarks, Evaluation</b></p> <p><i>Larry Beckett, President, West Virginia Welfare Reform Coalition</i>  <i>Charles R. Young, II, Assistant Commissioner, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources</i>  <i>David Cunningham, Consultant, EITC and Self-Sufficiency Initiatives, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families</i></p>
<p><b>3:00 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Adjourn</b></p>