



**THE PITON
FOUNDATION**
at Gary Community
Investments



Taxathon Media Kit

Partnering Organizations: Tax Help Colorado, Denver Asset Building Coalition and Mile High United Way

Resource Fair Participants: Center for Workforce Initiatives, DU Low Income Taxpayer Clinic, IRS Taxpayer Advocate Service, RE:Vision, mpowered, Denver Human Services, Denver Scholarship Foundation, Key Bank, Colorado 2-1-1, Community College of Denver

Volunteer Tax Preparers: Students from Community College of Denver, Metro State University, Legacy High School, Adams City High School, Mountain Range High School, Thornton High School (*High schools students completed concurrent enrollment courses through Fort Morgan Community College and Community College of Denver and passed a test to become IRS-certified preparers.*)

- Students who complete 40 or more hours at a tax site receive a letter of commendation from Governor Hickenlooper; and students that complete 100 or more hours receive the President's Volunteer Service Award

Background

At the first Taxathon in 2017, nearly 100 families received free tax help and claimed \$200,000 in refunds, including \$93,000 from the Earned Income Tax Credit.

Free tax prep saves taxpayers an average of \$250 in paid tax preparation fees.

The timing of Taxathon is important because more than 50 percent of tax filers claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit file their returns before Feb. 15.

Testimonials

Tax Help Colorado Client

Wendy, a single mother, works as a CNA to support her three children. For the past two years, Wendy has visited a Tax Help Colorado site to have her taxes prepared and has been able to claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Last tax season, she received a total refund of almost \$9,000 which she saves to use throughout the year. With three growing kids, Wendy uses the money towards clothes, food, school supplies, and unexpected expenses. "I make it stretch; it helps me get through the year because I don't make enough with my job." Wendy also greatly appreciates being able to have her taxes filed for free. "I can use the money that I would have spent on tax services on rent or car payments."

Tax Help Colorado volunteer student preparer

Kylea is a junior at Mountain Range High School. Kylea was encouraged by her accounting professor to volunteer her time with Tax Help Colorado so she could utilize her passions for business and community service. In addition to receiving college credits and gaining volunteer

experience, Kylea simply enjoys working with with people. “Being able to help people is really nice and rewarding”, states Kylea. Kylea is one of many high school student volunteers focused on making a difference in her community.

Additional Resources

- Latest News Taxathon - <http://www.piton.org/taxathon>
- Taxathon Flier - <https://goo.gl/y4NPXm>
- 2017 EITC Outreach Campaign Final Report - <https://goo.gl/Qb5FxX>
- Social Media Overview

The Piton Foundation Fast Facts

- The Piton Foundation, which is part of Gary Community Investments, is a private foundation established in 1976 by Denver oilman Sam Gary.
- It is committed to improving the lives of Colorado's low-income children and their families by increasing access to quality early childhood and youth development opportunities and fostering healthy family and community environments.
- In addition to investing in creative solutions for Colorado's low-income children and their families, Piton operates its own programs, including the Shift Research Lab, Tax Help Colorado, and the nation's largest and longest-running Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) public information campaign.
 - **Tax Help Colorado** offers free tax preparation assistance to individuals who earn less than about \$54,000 a year, helping to ease the burden of commercial tax preparation costs on low-wage earners. The program was launched in 2007 to help link even more Colorado families to valuable tax credits such as the EITC. The program utilizes community college and high school students who take an accredited course on income tax preparation then operate free tax sites on their campuses for college credit.
 - For more than 25 years, Piton has conducted the **Tax Credits for Working Families Public Information Campaign** to increase the number of eligible families receiving the EITC. Each year, with the help of hundreds of partners; including nonprofit, community, business and government organizations; Piton distributes education materials to hard-working families throughout Colorado. In addition, we execute a comprehensive marketing and advertising campaign to increase awareness of free tax help and valuable tax credits.