



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 23, 2019

Contact: Jenny Ocón, Executive Director  
Telephone number: 707-965-5010 ext. 200  
Email: [jocon@upvalleyfamilycenters.org](mailto:jocon@upvalleyfamilycenters.org)

### **UpValley Family Centers expands free bilingual tax services**

The UpValley Family Centers has helped low income individuals with free tax preparation service for 17 years – helping to generate \$5.4 million in refunds for northern Napa County residents.

“We help more and more individuals file their taxes every year, but we know there are still more residents who qualify for our services,” says Jenny Ocón, Executive Director. “Last year, our volunteers and staff provided 732 households with free tax preparation assistance, which resulted in \$887,000 in refunds – an average of \$1,211 per family. We estimate that that number of returns amounts to about 30% of all low-income households in the upvalley community.”

In 2019, UpValley Family Centers (UVFC) is once again offering Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) in response to the growing need to help build more financial security among low-income individuals. Free federal and state tax preparation services will be provided from January 28 through April 15 at UVFC’s offices in St. Helena and Calistoga, as well as the St. Helena Library and three local farmworker housing sites. Appointments are offered in the evenings and on weekends.

Services are available to any individual with an income under \$55,000 per year. Tax preparers will assist with Earned Income and Child Care Tax Credit claims as well as assisting with renewals of Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITINs) for residents without a social security number.

The program’s goals are to help clients increase financial literacy and work toward building economic stability through the process of filing taxes and increasing their savings.

“We come back every year because we are consistently treated with kindness, warmth, a smile, and most of all respect. We know we will be taken care of and it’s very reassuring.”~ Barbara, VITA client.

The VITA tax preparers at UVFC, who are certified by the IRS, include 27 local residents and students in the Business and Economic Department at Pacific Union College. Many are bilingual.

This program is made possible by the following generous funders: Citi Community Development, Mechanics Bank, Napa Valley Community Foundation, Wells Fargo Bank, Auction Napa Valley/Napa Valley Vintners, United Way of the Bay Area, and many individual donors.

For more information on UVFC’s VITA tax preparation services, or to make an appointment in any of our locations, call 707-965-5010.

###