



RealSense
A United Way Initiative
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**Contact Information:
Jeff Winkler, RealSense Director (904) 234-4313**

The RealSense Prosperity Campaign—Making Tax Preparation Even Easier

The RealSense Prosperity Campaign, a United Way of Northeast Florida initiative, through its member organizations and more than 450 volunteers, has been preparing federal income tax returns for two months now at its more than 60 locations. For a two-week period beginning on **Monday, March 29**, however, RealSense will add yet another way for people to get their taxes prepared for free.

Through a partnership with United Way Worldwide, the Wal-Mart Foundation, One Economy and the National Disability Institute, RealSense will host a mobile tax preparation van at various locations in Northeast Florida. Taxpayers who visit these locations can use the Beehive Software, a free online self-preparation option for federal taxes available to families that earn less than \$58,000 in total family income. As part of this partnership, Wal-Mart sponsored the creation of the MyFreeTaxes.com tour that will visit 30 cities nationwide, one of which is Jacksonville, to promote the service and train people to complete and file their taxes online, with the assistance of a certified tax preparer.

“This is our second year to participate in this project,” said Jeff Winkler, RealSense Director, “and we anticipate even more returns at these Beehive locations than last year. This is our way of offering Northeast Florida residents the opportunity to learn a valuable life skill that could save hundreds of dollars each year.”

The Beehive van will be open to the public at the following locations during the next two weeks:

| Day of Week | Date | Location | Address |
|--------------------|-------------|--|--|
| Monday | 3/29/2010 | Bank of America -Regency Branch | 9550 Regency Square Blvd., Jacksonville, 32225 |
| Tuesday | 3/30/2010 | Bank of America -Regency Branch | 9550 Regency Square Blvd., Jacksonville, 32225 |
| Wednesday | 3/31/2010 | St. Luke's Hospital | 4201 Belfort Rd., Jacksonville, 32216 |
| Thursday | 4/1/2010 | St. Vincent's Hospital | 1800 Barrs St., Jacksonville, 32204 |
| Saturday | 4/3/2010 | Potter's House Christian Fellowship – Kingdom Mall | 5310 Lenox Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32205 |
| Monday | 4/5/2010 | UNF – University Center (parking is free) | 12000 Alumni Dr., 32244 |
| Tuesday | 4/6/2010 | Riverplace Tower (Wachovia Building on the Southbank of St. Johns River) | 1301 Riverplace Blvd, 32207 |
| Wednesday | 4/7/2010 | Arlington United Methodist Church | 1400 University Blvd., N. Jacksonville, 32211 |
| Saturday | 4/10/2010 | Location TBD | |

For more information on the Beehive mobile tax van events, hours of operation and appointments, call Lindsay Ferguson at 904-390-4008 or lindsayf@uwnefl.org.

The Wal-Mart Foundation is also supporting 91 volunteer-assisted tax preparation campaigns across the country. Combined, this effort will help return \$1 billion in total tax refunds to qualifying, low-income families throughout the U.S. Last year, this partnership contributed to the completion of more than 650,000 tax returns, for a total of \$950 million in tax refunds and a savings of \$45 million in tax preparation fees.

Locally, in its first six years of operation, the RealSense Prosperity Campaign has impacted the Northeast Florida economy by putting more than \$25 Million directly back into the hands of hard-working families through federal income tax credits and money saved on income tax preparation fees to paid preparers. The largest of these credits is the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for wage earners whose total family income is \$49,000 and under (with at least three dependants). Despite the fact that the federal government enacted the EITC program in 1975, there are still thousands of families in Northeast Florida—as many as 25% according to IRS estimates—who don't know they are eligible for the extra income, which is more than \$5,600 at the maximum amount. For those wage earners eligible for the highest level, the Earned Income Tax Credit equates to an annualized raise of around \$2.00 per hour.

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