

Northwestern Mutual employees offer free tax guidance for lower-income families in Milwaukee

Annual program has helped return more than \$100 million to local residents

MILWAUKEE, March 28, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- As tax season approaches, residents in one Milwaukee neighborhood are lining up each week to receive complimentary guidance from expert community volunteers.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20130206/CG55426LOGO>)

Northwestern Mutual employees are partnering with the Social Development Commission (SDC) as part of the [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance \(VITA\) program](#) to prepare lower-income residents' taxes and file them electronically for free. Volunteers from the company are on hand every Thursday evening through April 11 at the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center.

Northwestern Mutual employees join other volunteers to prepare taxes for residents of households earning less than \$56,000 annually. The program is in its 12th year and has helped return more than \$100 million in refunds and credits to residents.

The volunteer effort is part of Northwestern Mutual's "[Building Neighborhood Capacity](#)" strategy to support neighborhood-strengthening nonprofit organizations in three Milwaukee neighborhoods: Metcalfe Park, Amani and Muskego Way. The Sixteenth Street Community Health Center is located in Milwaukee's Muskego Way neighborhood.

"We're connecting local residents with our employees to simplify tax season and build relationships in the community we serve," said John Kordsmeier, president, Northwestern Mutual Foundation.

VITA is a national program authorized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Volunteers must go through 12 hours of training and be certified to prepare tax returns. Locally, demand for the program is soaring.

"In this powerful program, volunteers are bringing millions in tax dollars back to help strengthen residents and transform a community," said Ella Dunbar, program services manager, Social Development Commission. "In 2002, volunteers helped prepare 2,700 returns. Last year, we were able to file more than 15,000 returns. We are in need of additional support to fulfill this year-over-year demand."

VITA will expand its volunteer pool for the 2014 tax season. It is in need of more Spanish-speaking volunteers to serve as translators, as well as corporate volunteers for extended evening and Saturday hours. To learn more about volunteering, contact LaToya Jones, asset development manager at SDC, at (414) 906-2823 or ljones@cr-sdc.org.

Northwestern Mutual has chosen to volunteer at the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center, which has been providing health care and social services to the south side of Milwaukee since 1969. This is the first year the VITA program has been offered at this site.

"We've earned the trust of residents in this community by continuously offering impactful social services like this free tax preparation program," said John Bartkowski, DrPH, President and CEO, Sixteenth Street Community Health Center. "We appreciate the generosity of volunteers like those from Northwestern Mutual who share their talents with our community each week to make this program a success."

Northwestern Mutual continues to be the largest corporate giver in the state of Wisconsin. More than 1,000 Northwestern Mutual employees donated 25,000 hours last year to community volunteer efforts through group activities, mentoring, charity drives, and service on nonprofit boards. In fiscal year 2013, the NM Foundation will contribute \$16.9 million to nonprofit organizations across the country, and more than half of the Foundation's dollars will continue to go to local nonprofits.

About the Northwestern Mutual Foundation

The mission of the Northwestern Mutual Foundation – the largest corporate foundation in the state of Wisconsin – is to build strong, vibrant communities that serve as a legacy to future generations. The Foundation's giving is designed to create an impact on the communities where the company's employees and financial representatives live and work. In fiscal year 2013, the Foundation will contribute \$16.9 million to nonprofit

organizations across the country. To learn more, visit <http://www.nmfoundation.com>.

About Northwestern Mutual

The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company – Milwaukee, WI ([Northwestern Mutual](#)) – among the "World's Most Admired" life insurance companies in 2012 according to FORTUNE® magazine – has helped clients achieve financial security for more than 155 years. As a mutual company with \$1.2 trillion of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual has no shareholders. The company focuses solely and directly on its clients and seeks to deliver consistent and dependable value to them over time. Northwestern Mutual and its subsidiaries offer a holistic approach to financial security solutions including: [life insurance](#), [long-term care insurance](#), [disability insurance](#), [annuities](#), [investment products](#), and [advisory products and services](#). Subsidiaries include [Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC](#), broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the [Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company](#), limited purpose federal savings bank; and [Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company](#); and [Russell Investments](#). To learn more, visit <http://www.northwesternmutual.com>.

About the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center

Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers have provided high quality health care, behavioral health services, health education and supportive social services to low-income residents of the diverse neighborhoods on Milwaukee's south side since 1969. In addition to primary medical care, comprehensive case-management programs help patients with education and self-management strategies for chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes and HIV. Innovative models of group care for pregnant women – Centering Pregnancy – and community leadership initiatives as part of our obesity prevention - Healthy Choices Program - and Lead Poisoning Prevention program reach patients with peer counselors and home visits. Sixteenth Street has earned the The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for health care quality and patient safety. To learn more, visit <http://www.ssche.org>.

About the Social Development Commission

The Social Development Commission has served for the past 50 years as a planner, coordinator, and implementer of human service programs for low-income residents of Milwaukee County. SDC operates programs designed to improve the overall quality of life for low-income individuals and families and annually serves more than 80,000 people. Its programs include services in the areas of Asset Development, Employment, Family Strengthening, Education & Training, and Support Services. To learn more, visit: <http://www.cr-sdc.org>.

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For further information: Shawn Rolland, 1-800-323-7033, mediarelations@northwesternmutual.com

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