



## Volunteer Finds Joy in Work at Free Tax Preparation Sites

### Joni Eitzmann

Joni Eitzmann is a certified volunteer tax preparer for the Omaha Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition. She works as Community Liaison for a major bank in Omaha and has prepared taxes for the Coalition for two years at the Girls Inc. location in north Omaha.



“I would tell potential volunteers to consider the difference that you can make in the lives of families.”

Volunteer - 2009

She was referred to the Coalition by her employer, who suggested she become involved at a VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) site as part of her work doing community outreach for the bank. Although Joni prepared taxes while fulfilling responsibilities at the bank, she often came on her own time to volunteer. She prepared over 100 returns in 2009! Her involvement is a testament to Joni’s large heart and generosity of time. Her dedication to service also comes through in the joy she expressed about the work.

Joni had a co-worker who was working part-time for private tax preparer. “It was such a big difference because I would be so happy about the work and she would end up referring clients to the Coalition! She would send clients to us who were right on the borderline of not getting a refund because of having to pay fees. And here I am just so happy with the work and I’m volunteering!”

Becoming a volunteer tax preparer requires a certain commitment to undergo training and IRS certification program. What motivated Joni through the training was, “free education! Its free education! That’s a good deal! The more you know the valuable you are. Plus you get the joy of helping people. So you’re smarter, you’re helping people, everybody’s happy!”

Joni found great joy in working with people as a volunteer. “I had an overall really great experience with the taxpayers. They for the most part are so thankful not to have to pay hundreds of dollars, especially when that amount can be used for so much for their family. Plus, through volunteering you see that everyone has the same basic needs for them and their families. I helped a young married couple who didn’t have any money; they were just so in love it was a real joy to help them. I asked another couple ‘how are you doing today?’ They said ‘oh I’m blessed, I’m blessed’. I just love that response. Only to find out later they had a sick child. I felt so privileged to help this family in any way I could. They made it worth it to be a volunteer.”

Omaha EITC Coalition  
3605 Q Street Omaha, NE 68107  
Phone: 402-250-9781  
Fax: 402-734-8887

We are always in need of volunteers!

Call **250-9781** or email **omahaeitc@cox.net** for information on how to become a volunteer today!