



A Message From  
ERIE COUNTY CLERK CHRISTOPHER L. JACOBS



March 2016

*Erie County Clerk, Chris Jacobs Reminds Citizens –*

**EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT PUTS MONEY IN YOUR POCKET**

*Federal and State Tax Credits can add up – See if you qualify*

If you worked in the past year and earned \$62,000 or less– you can get your taxes filed for free and you may qualify for both the state and federal Earned Income Tax Credit. Everyone who qualifies should take advantage of the tax credits available to them. The limit for the in person tax prep is \$54,000 and \$62,000 is the limit for the online tax filing option at [www.myfreetaxes.com](http://www.myfreetaxes.com). The United Way's CASH partner agencies along with hundreds of volunteers assist taxpayers each filing season to prepare accurate state and federal returns. All of the credits have one thing in common; you cannot receive them if you do not file your tax return. The earned income tax credit puts extra money, money that you have already earned, in your pocket.

In an effort to raise awareness of these important tax savings programs, the Erie County Auto Bureau, in cooperation with the United Way, will have volunteers explaining these important tax savings programs at the following Auto Bureau locations: Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup> - Sheridan Plaza, 2309 Eggert Road from 1-3pm; Thursday, March 31<sup>st</sup> - Downtown, Rath Building, 170 Pearl Street from 1-3pm; and Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Cheektowaga, 2122 George Urban Blvd. from 12-2pm.

Let the United Way CASH Partner agencies help you navigate through all the aspects of tax preparation including applying for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). CASH Buffalo (Creating Assets, Savings & Hope) works to increase the financial stability of low-income families by increasing awareness of tax credits and other income supports, connecting people to free tax preparation services and financial education and other local asset building resources.

**If you are not familiar with the Earned Income Tax Credit, the following is some basic information.** The EITC is a federal tax benefit created for working people who earn low to moderate incomes. It is a refundable credit that reduces or eliminates income taxes owed and helps individuals keep more of what they earn. If the amount of tax credit the worker qualifies for is more than the taxes owed, the worker will receive the difference as a cash refund. (NYS also has a match)

To qualify you must meet certain requirements and file a tax return, even if you do not owe any tax or are not required to file. You must have worked in 2015, meet the income limits below and have one or more qualifying children. If you do not have a qualifying child, you must be at least age 25, but under 65 at the end of 2015.

**2015 Earned Income Tax Credit Requirements:**

<b>Number of Children</b>	<b>Single Maximum Income</b>	<b>Married Filing Jointly Maximum Income</b>	<b>Maximum EITC</b>
No children	\$14,820	\$20,330	\$503
1 child	\$39,131	\$44,651	\$3,359
2 children	\$44,454	\$49,974	\$5,548
3 or more children	\$47,747	\$53,267	\$6,242

The EITC can contribute a substantial amount of money to families who are struggling to make ends meet, as much as \$6,242 depending on the size of the family. The IRS estimated that over 27 million citizens and families received over \$65 billion in EITC in tax year 2014, averaging \$2,400 per return. Those EITC dollars had a significant impact on the lives and the local communities of the nation's lowest paid working people. In 2013, the EITC helped bring over 9.4 million people above the poverty line, including 1,797,000 households in New York State and 5 million children.

New York State has a companion state version of the EITC, which will give eligible filers an additional .30 cents on any federal dollars of EITC benefits. To learn more about this and other New York State tax credits for which you may be eligible, visit [www.mybenefits.ny.gov](http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov) or call 1-800-906-9887.

It is not too late to apply for the 2015 Earned Income Tax Credit – the filing deadline is April 15, 2016. If you think you may qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and have additional questions or want a listing of FREE Tax Filing locations, you can contact 2-1-1 for more information.