UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

2021 TAX SEASON

University of Georgia Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Contact Info
vita@uga.edu
706-592-8237

Dawson Hall
305 Sanford Dr
Athens, GA 30602
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UGA UNITED CREDIT UNION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UGA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UGA VITA PROCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UGA VITA OVERVIEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROGRAM PROFILE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLIENT STATISTICS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFUND STATISTICS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAX PLANNING EDUCATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UGA FINANCIAL RESILIENCY LAB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAVINGS CONTEST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONOR INFORMATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UGA VITA reached clients in the Athens area thanks to Georgia United Credit Union. With 75 student participants, we serviced 80 cities and 692 clients living in the greater Athens area.

At Georgia United Credit Union, students met with clients to complete their tax returns in person within approximately one hour. Each client had a private space to meet with their preparer to ensure confidentiality. This year's fully remote sections met with their clients via Zoom. Preparers completed a client's tax return and held a meeting with their clients for 15-20 minutes to present their return and discuss any challenging tax concepts.

Without Georgia United Credit Union, UGA VITA would not be able to serve so many people in the Athens area or have been able to expand the Virtual VITA program. We are grateful for Georgia United Credit Union's enduring partnership and their employees' tireless support. THANK YOU Georgia United Credit Union!
UGA VITA is able to reach clients all across the state of Georgia thanks to our extension agents who make Virtual Vita possible. With the help of 21 agent participants, we reached clients across 70 counties and 259 cities. THANK YOU to UGA Cooperative Extension and the agents listed below who make Virtual VITA successful!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ashleigh Childs</th>
<th>Thomas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Becca Stackhouse</td>
<td>Crisp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky Collins</td>
<td>Appling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carin Booth</td>
<td>Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrie Vanderver</td>
<td>Ware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christa Campbell</td>
<td>Elbert &amp; Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindee Sweda</td>
<td>Spalding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana Carney</td>
<td>Lanier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Poston</td>
<td>Richmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgeanne Cook</td>
<td>Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ida Jackson</td>
<td>Wilkes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica Moore</td>
<td>Gilmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathryn Holland</td>
<td>Colquitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keishon Thomas &amp; Pat Hill</td>
<td>Bibb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leigh Anne Aaron</td>
<td>Morgan &amp; Oconee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitzi Parker</td>
<td>Sumter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Walters</td>
<td>Monroe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Stewart</td>
<td>Tattnall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxie Price</td>
<td>Tift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terri Black</td>
<td>Burke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UGA VITA PROCESS

GUCU

Prior to the pandemic, the in-person GUCU sessions completed between 25-30 returns each session. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UGA VITA had to limit in-person meetings to meet CDC social distancing guidelines. These changes included limiting meetings for each session to five scheduled appointments in each hour of our four-hour window of operation and reducing the number of weekly sessions from 4 to 2. With limited in-person community outreach, we allowed completed 20 returns each session.

UGA VITA created a Fully Remote operation for 2 weekly GUCU sessions, which helped expand the limited capacity at GUCU. Clients registered for appointments through GUCU and received an invitation to upload their tax documents to our secure client portal. From there, student preparers completed the client’s return one week prior to their appointment, so that missing information and any questions could be resolved, and the client could review their return prior to the client meeting. All returns were quality reviewed by one of our student managers. Managers worked with preparers to make corrections so that the preparer could learn from any mistakes. The preparer then met the client during their scheduled client meeting and presented the return to the client. Once the client felt confident in their return, he or she electronically signed via DocuSign, and we transmitted their return.

Virtual VITA

Virtual VITA continues to reach many different clients across Georgia and continues to grow dramatically each year.

Through Virtual VITA, clients drove to our various extension offices around the state with their tax documents. On arrival, the extension agent collected their documents and scanned and uploaded them to our secure portal. Once the documents were in the portal, one of our preparers completed the return while at the Charles Schwab Financial Center in Athens.

Once completed, one of our student managers reviewed the return. If there were any changes, the manager informed the preparer, so that they have the opportunity to learn and deepen their understanding. Once everything was ready, the preparer met the client and the extension agent during their scheduled meeting via zoom and presented the return to the client. Once the client felt confident in their return, they signed the return on paper with the extension agent, and the manager transmitted the tax return to the IRS.
This impact report is a comprehensive report including statistics on our 2021 tax season.

$600,000 FEES SAVED

Between the various schedules, 1040, 1040-x’s and state returns prepared, UGA VITA saved clients about $600,000 in tax preparation fees.

$2,455,452 IN REFUNDS

UGA VITA assisted clients all over the state of Georgia whose returns resulted in a tax refund. This created an aggregate amount of $2,455,452 in refunds.

$4,029,302 ECONOMIC IMPACT

UGA VITA’s 2021 economic impact based on tax preparation fees saved and total federal refunds was calculated to be $4,029,302.
This year, UGA VITA hired two graduate assistants and two hourly workers. These student workers acted as Site Coordinators for UGA VITA. Lance Palmer and Ben Jacobs led the in-person and fully remote VITA sessions and taught FHCE 4235S and FHCE 6235S. Joan Koonce supervised the operations of the virtual VITA sessions. Faith Rasmussen served as the Program Coordinator and communication liaison with the IRS.

Student Participants

This year, we had 130 students participate in UGA VITA. 93 of these students were
Financial Planning majors and 36 were Accounting majors. We also had 1 student from the School of Social Work. There were 15 graduate students and 115 undergraduate students.
UGA VITA served 1,614 clients throughout the 2021 Tax Season. 808 returns were prepared through the Virtual VITA channel and 692 were prepared through Georgia United Credit Union. In addition to filing 1,500 total federal returns for clients, 114 additional clients received guidance on tax issues, tax return reviews, and information about stimulus payments for the year.

The majority of our clients were Single filers. The second most common filing status was Head of Household at 27%. 6.9% of our clients filed Married Filing Jointly and 3.4% filed Married Filing Separately.
UGA VITA prepared a multitude of returns that resulted in a tax refund. This amount in aggregate came out to $2.46 Million in tax refunds. Of these refunds, $300K was from the Earned Income Tax Credit and $305K was due to the Child Tax Credit. 180 of our clients benefited from the EITC and 171 received the Child Tax Credit. 73 of our clients received an Education Tax Credit for an aggregate amount of $75K.

The graph above provides a visual representation of the refunds granted to our clients throughout our program's history. GUCU has been serving clients since 2007 and UGA Virtual VITA started serving clients through UGA Cooperative Extension in 2017.
CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The chart to the right represents a breakdown of UGA VITA’s clients by race. Clients provided this information on their intake forms.

Do you or any member of your household have a disability? 17% Yes
Are you or your spouse a Veteran from the US Armed Force? 14% Yes
Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino 5% VS Not Hispanic or Latino 95%

White 56.5%
Asian 7.2%

UGA VITA served clients across a range of income levels. This graph shows the distribution of the Adjusted Gross Income among our clients.
21 Virtual VITA agents reached clients in 70 different counties and 259 different cities across the state of Georgia. The pie chart to the left represents the UGA Extension regions served by Virtual VITA, but a complete list of all counties reached is below:

Abbeville  
Appleton 
Baldwin 
Baldwin County  
Banks  
Barrow  
Berrien County  
Bibb  
Bleckley  
Bradford  
Burke  
Butts  
Candler  
Clarke

Clayton  
Coffee  
Colquitt  
Columbia County  
Cordele  
Crisp  
Elbert  
Emanuel  
Evans  
Fannin  
Fayette  
Franklin  
Gilmer  
Glascock

Greene  
Gwinnett  
Hall  
Hancock  
Hart County  
Henry  
Houston  
Jackson  
Jasper  
Lamar  
Lee  
Liberty  
Lincoln County  
Lowndes  
Madison  
McCormick  
McDuffie  
Monroe  
Morgan  
Newton  
Oconee  
Oglethorpe  
Putnam  
Richmond  
Rockdale  
Schley  
Spalding  
Sumter County  
Taliaferro  
Tattnall  
Thomas  
Tift  
Toombs  
Union County  
Upson  
Walton  
Ware  
Warren  
Washington  
White County  
Wilkes

In addition to the counties reached by Virtual VITA, GUCU primarily served the **greater Athens** community of Northeast Georgia. In addition to Georgia state tax returns, UGA VITA prepared clients' state tax returns for 18 additional states.
Upon meeting with the clients, every client receives a client follow-up email. This email includes details about their return as well as information to help them plan for the upcoming tax year. The students have prepared fact sheets that are tailored to the specific needs of that client. The fact sheets include the following topics: 401K Plans, Budgeting, Charitable Contributions, Debt Payoff, Emergency Funds, FSA, HSA, IRA, Refund Loans, Splitting Refunds, and Withholdings. The fact sheets help clients understand and act on tax planning opportunities available to them for future years. You can find our fact sheets on our website using the QR code below.

https://www.fcs.uga.edu/fhce/vita

Highlights from Fact Sheets

401K Plans: Withdrawals from 401K plans prior to 59 1/2 create a 10% penalty on your tax returns unless it meets a limited exception, such as unreimbursed medical expenses.

Budgeting: Split your monthly income into three sections - Needs, Wants, and Savings. Place 50% of your monthly income to needs, 30% to wants, and 20% to savings whether that is emergency funds or retirement.

Charitable Contributions: Taxpayers can deduction $300 of cash donations in addition to the standard deduction.

Debt Payoff: Use your tax refund to pay off some of your debts!

Emergency Funds: Set aside $20-$50 from each paycheck to ensure you have funds to fall back on in case of car repairs, home needs, job loss, or any unexpected expenses.

Splitting Refunds: Split your refund between a checking account, savings account, or an IRA account to build your savings in case of emergency, if you do not intend to pay any debt off debt with your refund.

Withholdings: When your job provides you with a Form W-4 to select your tax withholdings, place the number one in the allowances box as that will withhold enough for any potential tax liability.
Our desires to expand tax-based experiential learning at UGA, better serve clients facing challenging tax-related issues, and foster wealth-building activities and habits among those we serve have led to the creation of the UGA Financial Resiliency Lab. The UGA Financial Resiliency Lab will house UGA VITA, expand wealth-building interventions, and initiate year-round tax-based experiential learning.

The mission of the UGA Financial Resiliency Lab is to improve the economic well-being of individuals and families by delivering evidence-based interventions through experiential learning settings that improve the financial resiliency of communities and foster financial self-reliance among individuals and families.

The UGA Financial Resiliency Lab, housed in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences, is proud to partner with: Georgia United Credit Union, UGA Cooperative Extension, UGA School of Social Work, and the J.M. Tull School of Accounting.
"Hello, my name is Joy. I am a single mom from Baxley, Ga. I come from a very loving family that supports each other in all we do. When I was presented the opportunity to split my refund into an emergency fund, I did not hesitate. I will be using my emergency funds towards my family. I have an 85-year-old grandmother who can’t do much by herself. As a family, we take care of my grandmother to make sure she has the items she needs. Being a single parent sometimes days are easy, and some days are harder. I will never give up on my daughter that’s why I try my best to be my best. Splitting my refund also helped me to help my daughter get the extra help she needed for school to have better grades and all A’s. Thank you for this opportunity to tell a little of my story. Thank you." -Joy, UGA Virtual VITA Client

"I had to retire early because of complications from cancer. The side effects from the treatment took a toll on my body. I now have mobility issues and a compromised immune system. I learned that, “What doesn’t kill you, makes you stronger!” Needless to say, I ended up with Covid-19. I was in the hospital and thought I was going to die. This virus is one bad bug! With the help of my God, my family, and my friends, I pulled through again. The doctors say, “I’m a miracle!” I believe that too. I choose to split the refund because I know firsthand that emergencies do come. Medical bills pile up. Medicine is sky high. Just getting check-ups every three months gets very expensive. I put part of the refund in my saving’s account for the unexpected. There’s always something down the road. I wanted to be a little more prepared for it. Thank you." -Nancy, UGA GUCU VITA Client
Thank you to Georgia United Credit Union and our various donors for supporting UGA VITA. We are incredibly grateful for all that you do and your belief in the impact this program has on the state of Georgia. We look forward to working with you all in the future! Also, special thanks to Zaxby's, Chick-fil-A, and Barberito's, for providing meal cards that were used as student awards throughout tax season.

If you are interested in becoming a donor, please refer to the QR code to the right. This will direct you to our website where you can become a 1% Giving Club Member or a Corporate Partner with our program.
We wanted to share how the VITA program has been such a benefit for our family over the years. For starters, it is a free service, and it has saved us a lot of money over time. It is also very reliable. We have never had any issues after filing the taxes and the refunds have been super speedy. The volunteers helping us have always been very courteous and professional, and any questions that we had were answered thoroughly. This year, we had the appointment online which was very convenient and easy. We talked about financial literacy and splitting the refund into savings and checking accounts which we did. All in all, a great experience. Thank you so much for your help.

~UGA VITA Client