

BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE

Free tax preparation available for qualifying households

Markell says EITC can be life-changing

By Rachel Swick
Cape Gazette staff

Families that earn less than \$37,000 annually are eligible for state and federal earned income tax credits (EITC) that could put as much as \$4,400 back in their pockets.

Sussex Countians can visit a mobile tax unit or one of six sites countywide to receive help on

their taxes and participate in the EITC program. Last year more than \$2 million was refunded to the 1,300 participants in the program.

Campaign spokesman state Treasurer Jack Markell said depending on family size and income, the credit can be as much as \$4,400. "I'm passionate about this program because it truly is a life-changing program," said Markell. "The net effect is that if a worker earns \$7 an hour, by claiming the credit, it raises their

hourly wage to \$9."

Nehemiah Gateway Community Development Corp. Executive Director Mary Dupont announced that the agency has trained more than 400 volunteers to work at 23 sites throughout the state.

"The mobile unit, donated by First State Community Action Agency, will be visiting five locations in Sussex County," said Dupont. "We also hope that with free tax preparation, we can save taxpayers money that they would

Continued on page 31



Residents of Sussex County can visit this mobile tax assistance unit, outfitted with computers for tax preparation. Shown talking inside the unit are (l-r) Treasurer Jack Markell; Jorge Santiago; Zaida Guajardo of La Esperanza in Georgetown; and Linda Guy, housing supervisor for First State Community Action Agency.



Rachel Swick photos

The Earned Income Credit (EITC) program would not be possible without partnerships between the state and local agencies, said Treasurer Jack Markell. Jan. 10, in Georgetown. Shown are (l-r) Zaida Guajardo of La Esperanza in Georgetown; Michelle Harris of the Internal Revenue Service; Mary Dupont of Nehemiah Gateway Community Development Corp.; Markell; and Bernice Edwards of First State Community Action Agency in Georgetown.

What to Bring

For tax preparers to assist those who need help with their taxes, people must bring appropriate documentation as follows:

- W-2s and 1099s from employers
- Social Security Cards (for everyone listed on the tax form)
- Copy of last year's tax return
- List of other income/expenses (itemized deductions)
- Child care information (providers ID number and receipts)
- Blank check or savings account information for direct deposit
 - 1099s for interest, dividends, unemployment, government and miscellaneous income
- 1098s for student loan interest, mortgage interest or property tax

Where to Go

Tax service in eastern Sussex County is available from Jan. 17 until April 15. For other locations, contact helpline at 800-464-4357

Lewes: Pinetown Community Center, 2 Pinetown Road
Thursdays, 5 to 9 p.m.

Georgetown: Del Tech, Student Services Center, staff dining hall
Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 6 to 9 p.m.

Georgetown: First State Community Action Agency, Central Sussex
(Se habla Espanol), 211 N. Race St.
Tuesdays, 6 to 9 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

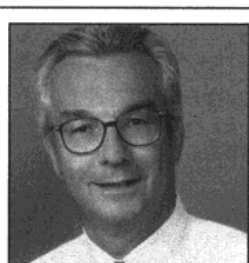
Flat world creates intense employment competition

Recently, I had the opportunity to read a book written by Thomas F. Friedman titled "The World Is Flat." This gem has been on the best sellers list for the past 38 weeks and for good reason.

Mr. Friedman has won the Pulitzer Prize three times while at the New York Times, where he writes as the foreign affairs columnist. He has had three best-selling books prior to this mega hit.

The author basically explains how the fall of communism and the advancement of the internet have removed many physical barriers and is causing economic globalization whether we want it or not.

Probably the greatest thing



FINANCE

David Clogg

David R. Clogg is a financial adviser at Chapin, Davis & Baltimore. For more information, call 800-222-3246.

changing world.

For the past century, our standard of living has gotten better with each new generation as more and more money has become available. The United States has had a lock on education that has helped our youngsters secure well paying careers until the fall of communism and the introduction of the internet.

The advanced education of Third World populations had been held back due to the lack of funds to send their children overseas to our institutions of higher learning, and political forces had forced many students to stay at home.

With the advent of the internet and the fall of communism, many foreign students are now able to

the United States for their degrees.

Whereas in the past when the American student only had to compete with one another for jobs, our students are beginning to feel the pressure from foreign students for the top positions at U. S. corporations.

It also appears that the American student is shying away from promising careers in science and technology.

For example, according to a report from the National Academy of Sciences, only 6 percent of U.S. undergraduates are studying engineering, while 40 percent of Chinese undergraduate are seeking engineering degrees. The report went on to say in 2004 China

net we don't need employees on our soil, and the salaries paid to these engineers is much less than the salaries required in America.

Not only are the Asian countries graduating more engineers on their soil, but with the abundance of money, they are sending more and more of their students to our shores.

The National Academy's report went on to state that students from China, India and the former Soviet Union accounted for nearly 50 percent of all U.S. doctorates awarded in engineering and computer science in 2004.

Once the students graduate, they head back home and our corporations - such as Microsoft - follow them back and set up of-