

MEDIA ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
November 28, 2012

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WH Resident Honored for Volunteer Service Helping Families with Tax Prep *Al Goodkofsky Presented Community Service Award at CRT's 2012 Annual Meeting*



HARTFORD— West Hartford resident Al Goodkofsky received the Volunteer Service Award at the community action agency Community Renewal Team's 2012 Annual Meeting on Nov. 27 for his hundreds of hours he's dedicated to helping lower- and moderate- income families prepare their taxes through CRT's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA) program.

Last year alone, Goodkofsky offered more than 280 hours volunteering six days a week to help families receive tax refunds. All VITA volunteers together helped save \$7.3 million in returns for 2,040 individuals and families who filed taxes last year through the program.

"I think of it as a valuable thing that I'm doing with my time in retirement, and I get the satisfaction knowing that I've helped people in a significant way," Goodkofsky said. "You can see it in their faces when I talk to them, it's very rewarding for me."

Goodkofsky retired from a career in the actuarial department at CIGNA, so it's no surprise his way with numbers. The upcoming 2013 tax season will mark his fifth consecutive year volunteering since contacting CRT when he heard about the VITA program.

VITA is a nationwide initiative that uses volunteers from suburban communities to help prepare tax returns for lower- and moderate-income families for free, and often it can help families save thousands per year on taxes. Volunteers need no prior tax preparation experience, and IRS-certified training is provided.

Interested VITA volunteers are encouraged to attend one of the two upcoming Information Sessions listed below:

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Location: CRT Main Office, 555 Windsor St., Hartford, CT 06120

- Friday, **November 30, 2012** from 2-3:30p.m.

- Monday, **December 3, 2012** from 5:30-7:00p.m.

In addition to volunteer placements in Hartford, volunteers will be asked to prepare taxes in the town offices in Manchester, East Hartford and Middletown.

This year marks CRT's eleventh year operating VITA. Over the last ten years CRT has prepared over 17,000 tax returns and has helped in giving back over 40 million dollars into the hands of those who need it most—between federal refunds and state tax refunds.

In addition to tax preparation, CRT staff offers families and individuals information about other programs available to help them build wealth, purchase assets or otherwise take steps to improve their quality of life. Programs like IDA (Individual Development Accounts) helps families earn matched dollars to help towards the purchase of a first home, a business or an education.

VITA's IRS training is free for volunteers to become certified tax preparers. Typically volunteers give 3 hours per week of their time from mid-January through April 15.

If you are interested in helping CRT this year, please contact Andrea Hardy at 560-4210 or at HardyA@crtct.org for more information about this wonderful opportunity and how you can give back to local communities.

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Community Renewal Team, Inc. is the designated Community Action Agency for Middlesex and Hartford Counties and is the largest non-profit provider of human services in Connecticut. The agency's mission is Preparing Our Community to Meet Life's Challenges. The mission is achieved each day by helping people and families become self-sufficient while making sure basic needs are met. CRT's programs include Head Start, Meals on Wheels, energy assistance, supportive housing and shelters, and many others, serving people in more than 60 cities and towns in both our core catchment area and throughout Connecticut. www.crtct.org