



State Board of Equalization

# News Release

**Vice Chair Michelle Steel**

**3<sup>rd</sup> District – Orange County**

Cynthia Bridges  
Executive Director  
[www.boe.ca.gov](http://www.boe.ca.gov)

**For Immediate Release**  
**April 5, 2013**

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## **Free Income Tax Return Preparation at VITA Events in Orange County**

**Sacramento** –Individuals who need help with income tax return preparation are invited to attend the Orange County Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) services sponsored by Board of Equalization (BOE) Vice Chair Michelle Steel and Orange County United Way.

Qualifying taxpayers can visit [http://www.boe.ca.gov/members/msteel/tax\\_preparation.html](http://www.boe.ca.gov/members/msteel/tax_preparation.html) to get information about VITA events being held at California State University, Fullerton, and at Irvine Valley College. Taxpayers can also search for statewide VITA locations and dates.

The federal government offers up to \$5,891 in Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) to households earning less than \$50,270 annually. Free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) events throughout Southern California help qualified taxpayers receive much needed federal and state tax credits. Every year, VITA volunteers, who have been trained and certified by the Internal Revenue Service, offer free tax filing assistance.

Individuals earning an annual income less than \$57,000 can also qualify for free tax preparation assistance at select schools, community centers, and nonprofit organizations throughout Orange County as part of Orange County United Way’s annual EITC program. The Orange County United Way is a nonprofit organization that helps Orange County children, families, and individuals meet their education, income, and health needs.

“This program provides free tax preparation for low to moderate income individuals and families who may not be able to afford a tax preparer. VITA also connects low-income earners with the Earned Income Tax Credit. This credit puts money in their pockets,” said Vice Chair Michelle Steel.

The final event for the 2012 tax season, sponsored by Vice Chair Steel, Orange County United Way, and Irvine Valley College, will take place on April 13, 2013.

**Event:** Free Income Tax Return Preparation at VITA Events in Orange County

**Date:** Saturday, April 13, 2013

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Place:** Irvine Valley College  
5500 Irvine Center Drive  
Business Sciences & Technology Innovation, BST 212  
Irvine, CA 92618

**Register:** Call 1-888-434-8248

**Information:** [www.boe.ca.gov/members/msteel/tax\\_preparation.html](http://www.boe.ca.gov/members/msteel/tax_preparation.html)

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***Editor's note: Listen to the PSA for this event (30-second audio).***

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Elected to the Board of Equalization in 2006 and re-elected in 2010, Michelle Steel serves as *Southern California's elected taxpayer advocate*. In December 2007, Steel discovered the Board of Equalization had delayed the return of millions of dollars in security deposits owed to California businesses. Procedures were changed due to Steel's decisive leadership. Following her investigation, the tax agency refunded tax security deposits to over 5,500 small businesses. To date, over \$100 million in security deposits have been returned to taxpayers.

The five-member California State Board of Equalization (BOE) is a publicly elected tax board. The BOE collects more than \$53.7 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes. For more information on other taxes and fees in California, visit [www.taxes.ca.gov](http://www.taxes.ca.gov).

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