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**BETHPAGE ANNOUNCES 8TH ANNUAL VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
AVAILABLE FEBRUARY 2, 2011 – APRIL 13, 2011**

**Eligible Long Islanders to Receive Free Tax Filing Assistance –
More than 1,000 Long Islanders Expected to Benefit**

Bethpage, NY – February 1, 2011 – As part of its ongoing commitment to the community, Bethpage Federal Credit Union will provide the government’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program for low to moderate- income households unable to prepare their own tax returns. Qualifying individuals with 2010 incomes of \$49,000 and below are eligible and can receive free assistance at 10 Bethpage branch locations throughout Nassau and Suffolk Counties beginning February 2, 2011. One does not need to be a Bethpage member to qualify. Bilingual Tax Assistors are available.

Over 150 IRS certified volunteers, almost double the amount of last year’s volunteers, will work with taxpayers through Bethpage, which coordinates the largest VITA program on Long Island. Now in its 8th year, more than 1,100 returns were filed at Bethpage through last year’s VITA program, up from 671 the year prior. Bethpage works with volunteers from across Long Island, including various Long Island universities and colleges that participate in the VITA program. Bethpage offers students with supervised “real time” experience as part of their hands-on skills training.

The Federal government’s Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), much of which is left unclaimed each year due to a lack of awareness, will also be given to qualifying Long Islanders through Bethpage’s VITA program. Enacted by Congress in 1975, the EITC is a Federal income tax credit for workers who don’t earn a high income and meet certain eligibility requirements. Taxpayers who qualify and claim the

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credit could pay less Federal tax, pay no tax or even get a tax refund. Long Island's Earned Income Tax Credit Coalition, which was developed by the Health & Welfare Council of Long Island, was initiated to create awareness for VITA and the Earned Income Tax Credit.

"In 2010, many individuals and families faced unemployment and declining wages, making more taxpayers eligible for the EITC than ever before," said Gwen O'Shea, President and CEO, Health & Welfare Council of Long Island. "The Earned Income Tax Credit is one of the most effective anti-poverty programs made available by the Federal government. Working class families and individuals living on Long Island can benefit from receiving this credit which could put as much as \$6,000 into the pockets of a family with two children. With the help of partners like Bethpage, we are getting the word out and informing as many eligible taxpayers on Long Island as possible."

"Last year's VITA program at Bethpage brought back nearly \$1.3 million to the Long Island community, helping impact the well being of many individuals and families," said Rob Suarez, Assistant Vice President of Community Development, Bethpage. "The tax filing process can be overwhelming, and many eligible taxpayers aren't even aware of the Earned Income Tax Credit that they can receive. Each year, millions of dollars go unclaimed, which is why the EITC Coalition was formed – to help get the word out to Long Islanders."

VITA services will be available on Wednesday evenings and Saturday afternoons in Bethpage's Freeport, Hempstead, Massapequa, Elmont, Westbury, Roosevelt, Bay Shore, Farmingdale, Central Islip and Riverhead branches. For more information on exact times and paperwork needed, please visit Bethpage's "Events" page at www.lovebethpage.com, or call 1-800- 628-7070.

"VITA is an important program for Bethpage and the entire taxpaying community, especially during this difficult economy. All qualified taxpayers should take advantage of the VITA and EITC programs because they could be eligible to receive deserving tax discounts and refunds that otherwise will go unclaimed, said Linda Armyn, Senior Vice President of Corporate Development and Government Affairs, Bethpage.

Under the guidelines of the VITA program, Bethpage coordinates the services of its volunteers, who are trained by the Internet Revenue Service (IRS), to electronically prepare all specific forms including, among others, 1040EZ, 1040A, and 1040. Bethpage is also an e-file site where taxpayers can file their income tax returns electronically. E-filers will receive refunds twice as quickly as those using paper returns in as little as 10 business days when they choose Direct Deposit. Taxpayers who do not have a direct deposit account and wish to receive payment in this format can open a Bethpage account when filing their tax returns.

Bethpage will also make mobile VITA assistance available to the employees of its Long Island partner organizations including Local 1102, CPC Community Program Center, Via Tech, NANZ, Pronto, Circulo De La Hispanidad, Clearvision, ACLD, Touro College, United Cerebral Palsy of Nassau, and Long Island Head Start.

Qualifying taxpayers planning to take advantage of Bethpage's VITA program need to bring the following materials with them for review: 2010 tax package of wage and earnings statements (Form W-2), all interest statements (Form 1099-INT), all other income and expense information, as well as a social security card and photo identification. To file taxes electronically on a married filing joint tax return, both spouses must be present.

Bethpage Federal Credit Union is a not-for-profit financial cooperative, existing solely to serve its members and has experienced rapid growth in recent years to become a strong alternative to banks. Bethpage was approved for the largest federal community charter in the U.S. in 2003 and now is Long Island's largest credit union and leading community financial institution with over 180,000 members, 22 branches and 60 shared service center locations throughout Nassau and Suffolk Counties. As a financial cooperative, Bethpage offers better rates, lower fees and a full menu of personal and commercial financial services.

Bethpage maintains branch locations in Bay Shore, Bethpage, Central Islip, Commack, Elmont, Farmingdale, Freeport, Glen Cove, Hempstead, Huntington, Levittown, Lynbrook, Massapequa, Melville, Mineola, North Babylon, Port Jefferson, Riverhead, Seaford, Smithtown, Roosevelt and Westbury with over 250 surcharge-free ATMs in King Kullen, 7-Eleven, Walgreen's and Costco locations throughout Long Island. For more information, call 1-800-628-7070 or visit www.lovebethpage.com.

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