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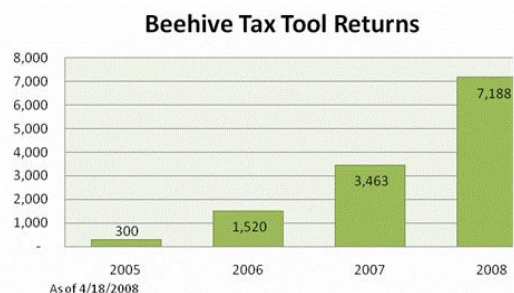
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Low-income Families Receive Millions in Refunds Using the Beehive's Online Tax Tools

7,000 Families Receive \$1,185 Average State and Federal Refund

WASHINGTON – Filing your taxes is complicated—so complicated that an estimated 70 percent of working families receiving the Earned Income Tax Credit paid for professional preparation assistance. To address the need for self-preparation assistance and help families save more of their refunds, One Economy Corporation provided free online tax-assistance services for to 7,119 families across the country through its multilingual self-help web portal, the Beehive. The average refund was more than \$1000—an amount equivalent to an extra pay check or month's rent for many families.

One Economy, a global nonprofit that uses innovative technology to create tools that help people build better lives, created the *Tax Tool* (www.theBeehive.org/taxes) with generous support from E*Trade Financial to help families build financial literacy, understand tax preparation, and file for themselves. Filers using the Beehive—one-third of whom received the Earned Income Tax Credit—received a total of \$9.5 million in refunds, including \$8.4 million in federal refunds. The online tool, which was co-sponsored by H&R Block, helped households benefit from more than \$340,000 in donated tax services. When combined, these households benefited from more than \$340,000 in donated tax services from H&R Block (HRB).



Re-launched in 2008, the new *Tax Tool* goes beyond providing free filing and preparation assistance; more than 150,000 people accessed information on the Earned Income Tax Credit and other important tax credits, economic stimulus payments, and other free tax-related community-based services. Information and resources include:

- Free online preparation and filing of federal and state taxes for households earning less \$54,000 in 2007 using H&R Block TaxCut software
- Information about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and other important tax credits
- Educational resources on avoiding tax scams and spending refunds wisely
- Contact information for free community-based tax offices and other tax-related services for low-income households
- Tools to help taxpayers get organized and reduce the frustration around tax time
- “Learn the Language” section that explains tax and financial terms in plain language
- Special instructions for immigrants and victims of the California wildfires

People from all 50 states used the Beehive to file their taxes, and local service organizations nationwide incorporated the *Tax Tool* into their initiatives. For example, AmeriCorps Alums, a program of Points of Light & Hands On Network, promoted the *Tax Tool* as a resource for alumni, who rated the free tax preparation and filing service as one of the most valuable benefits they received. Additionally, the City of Sacramento's Volunteer Tax Assistance Program used the Beehive to help hundreds of low-income residents with free assisted self-preparation of tax returns. At the Upper Manhattan Workforce1



Career Center, volunteers used the Beehive to create a new tax preparation workshop, targeting clients who had never before filed their own taxes.

“The Beehive’s *Tax Tool* has helped thousands of families get the refunds they deserve, returning millions of dollars to communities in need,” said Rey Ramsey, chief executive officer of One Economy. “The Beehive helps people take control of their finances—at tax time and beyond.”

About One Economy

One Economy Corporation is a global nonprofit that leverages the power of technology and information to connect low-income people the economic mainstream. One Economy brings broadband into the homes of low-income people, produces public-purpose media, and trains and employs youth to enhance communities' technology capacity. Learn more at www.one-economy.com.

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