

January 24, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Grand Opening Rockwood Weed and Seed VITA Tax Aide Center**

**Portland/Gresham (OR)** - The Rockwood Weed and Seed Steering Committee is hosting the grand opening of the Rockwood Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Center (VITA)/Tax Aide Center on **Thursday, February 1, 2007, 1-4:00 pm.**, at the **Rockwood Community Office, 18709 SE Stark Street, Gresham, Oregon.** The VITA Tax Aide Center, which will provide free tax assistance and preparation, is open to seniors and low to moderate income community residents, with a special emphasis on service to citizens residing in the Rockwood area.

Gresham Police Chief Carla Piluso will be the first customer of the center on February 1<sup>st</sup>, leading the community into the tax preparation season. Refreshments and snacks will be provided. Regular center operations start Saturday February 3, 2007 with sign-ins beginning at 8:30 a.m. for appointment times scheduled throughout the day.

"Our goal is to increase the amount of tax refunds coming back to residents which they can then spend back in the community," said Maura K. Cioeta, Rockwood Steering Committee Chairperson. "We are excited to be able to bring this service to local residents."

The Executive Office of Weed and Seed VITA centers were launched in January 2006 and have processed more than \$15 million in total tax refunds nationwide. In cooperation with the IRS, VITA Centers are designed to provide free income tax assistance to working individuals and families the centers and operate in communities throughout the United States. Through the promotion of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC), the VITA Tax Aide center seeks to assist low income residents with beneficial tax information that can assist families in poverty to accumulate significant assets.

The Police Activities League of Greater Portland (PAL) is the sponsoring agency for Rockwood Weed and Seed and the VITA Center project. More information is available at [www.weedandseedoregon.org/rockwood/VITATaxAide.htm](http://www.weedandseedoregon.org/rockwood/VITATaxAide.htm), or contact Sarah Broderick, VITA Tax Aide Center Coordinator for Rockwood Weed and Seed at 503-816-1530 or [taxaide@weedandseedoregon.org](mailto:taxaide@weedandseedoregon.org). **Volunteers to support the effort are still needed.**

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