



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Simcha Felder

Free Income Tax Preparation & Filing at Touro College

SIMCHA FELDER March 15, 2019

| ISSUE: **INCOME TAXES, TAX RETURNS**



Every Sunday through April 7th, Touro College LAS is again providing free tax preparation and electronic filing services to assist tax payers earning up to \$54,000 with their Federal and NY State income taxes through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA).

“Taxes and cost of living in New York are high enough. We want you to keep as much of your hard earned money as possible,” said Senator Felder. “If you have concerns about understanding how the new tax codes will affect you and filing your taxes correctly, you’re in good company - most New Yorkers feel the same way, but you don’t have to worry. The

VITA program at Touro's Avenue J campus is a reliable resource that is here to help you."

Tax preparation services are provided in English, Yiddish and Hebrew by IRS-Certified Touro College accounting students under the academic supervision of Dr. Shammai Bienenstock, Deputy Chair of Accounting, with administrative coordination provided by Joshua Zilberberg, Senior Advisor. "Now in its eighth year, Touro's VITA Program continues to provide vital support to taxpayers right in the heart of the neighborhood," expressed Senator Felder.

"VITA serves several goals for us," explained Professor Bienenstock. "It gives our students some real-world experience in the realm of tax preparation; it allows our students to interact with the diverse population of New York and finally, the program helps us fulfill Touro's mission of giving back to the community."

There are many reasons why so many people find preparing income taxes both challenging and stressful. Tax codes are complicated, change from year to year and use unfamiliar lingo. A recent Harris Poll found 98% of taxpayers worry about mistakes on their taxes. Many people fear paying too little and triggering an audit. Almost as many are concerned that their calculations will add up to owing the government even more than they have withheld. An error on even one deduction or tax credit can have costly consequences.

"There's too much pressure to get this done alone," said C.T., a Flatbush resident. "When I was working I used to go to a large tax preparation company," she explained, "but, that gets very expensive. Once I retired, I decided to give this a try and I've been back every year for the past four years. Everyone is always very professional and courteous; it's a wonderful service."

"Taxes are certain, but worrying about them shouldn't be," concluded Senator Felder.

Free Income Tax Preparation is located at Touro College, 1602 Avenue J. Sundays only, through April 7, from 10 am to 1 pm. You must bring certain paperwork and documentation with you, for more information please call Touro VITA at 718-252-7800 extension 59286 or Senator Felder at 718-253-2015.