

## Program Services

Over the years, VTLP has expanded the program reach and services provided.

Today, VTLP's core functions align with individual IRS programs.

### **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**

Tax return preparation for current year, prior year and amended returns

### **Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE)**

Tax preparation assistance for individuals age 60 and older

### **Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC)**

Education on taxpayer rights and responsibilities

Assistance to taxpayers in controversy with the IRS

Program volunteers and ABDC staff provide assistance year-round from the Anchorage Mail-in Site and through direct outreach when travel is permitted.



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# 2021 VOLUNTEER TAX & LOAN PROGRAM BERING STRAIT



## ALASKA BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

*Strengthening local economies  
one taxpayer at a time*

# Volunteer Tax and Loan Program: Bering Strait 2021

## Region History

The Bering Strait region is located in western Alaska along the Bering Sea and Norton Sound and is home to the finish line of the world famous Iditarod sled dog race.

VTLP began providing assistance in the region through outreach to the communities of Elim, Saint Michael and Stebbins in 2009. The number of villages assisted eventually expanded to include sixteen villages until lack of regional funding suspended outreach altogether.

In more recent years, outreach resumed to communities requesting and supporting services brought directly to their residents.

In 2021, to protect residents from COVID-19, volunteer teams did not travel, resulting in all assistance being provided from the Anchorage Mail-in Site. Fortunately, VTLP volunteers and ABDC staff were able to provide service remotely, helping residents to maintain compliance with the IRS and capture stimulus payments not yet received.

## Statewide Statistics

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Tax Returns Prepared        | 4,900    |
| Taxpayers Assisted          | 6,050    |
| Refunds Generated           | \$10.9 M |
| Communities Assisted        | 163      |
| Volunteer Hours Contributed | 3,100    |

## Region Summary

This year, team VTLP provided tax assistance to the Bering Strait region from the Anchorage Mail-in Site. Together, staff and volunteers:

- Assisted Brevig Mission, Diomede, Elim, Koyuk, Nome, Saint Michael, Savoonga, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Stebbins, Teller, Unalakleet and White Mountain
- Assisted 300 taxpayers and spouses, including:
  - 60 taxpayers age 60 and over
  - 17 commercial fishermen
- Prepared 260 tax returns
- Generated \$640,000 in tax refunds
- Captured \$193,000 in Earned Income Tax Credit
- Saved taxpayers an estimated \$74,000 in tax preparation fees

## Village Statistics

| Traveled Village (2020) | Returns Prepared | People Assisted | Refunds Generated |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Elim                    | 21               | 28              | \$58,902          |
| Nome                    | 25               | 29              | \$56,573          |
| Savoonga                | 37               | 45              | \$168,534         |
| Shaktoolik              | 19               | 22              | \$50,098          |
| Stebbins                | 45               | 53              | \$117,125         |
| Unalakleet              | 48               | 58              | \$93,084          |
| White Mountain          | *                | 8               | *                 |
| Other Bering Strait     | 54               | 62              | \$84,185          |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>257</b>       | <b>305</b>      | <b>\$640,170</b>  |

\*Disclosure laws prevent these numbers from being disclosed when data is from \*\*Villages traveled to in

## Special Thanks

VTLP services were made available through generous financial contributions from general program contributors and the following region entities:

*City of Koyuk*

*City of Shaktoolik*

*Native Village of Elim*

*Native Village of Koyuk*

*Sitnasuak Native Corporation*

