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Contact: Colleen Coghlan
916-281-4503 (cell)

Sacramento Taxpayers Take Part in Free Online Tax Preparation and E-Filing Program

CCIA and Intuit Help Active Duty Military and Low-Income Taxpayers File 2008 Return and Claim Tax Refunds

Sacramento, CA– Approximately 130 lower-income taxpayers from the Sacramento area beat the looming tax filing deadline by receiving free income tax preparation and filing assistance – and a head start on obtaining refunds – at a self tax preparation event hosted this weekend at Asian Resources.

The Computer and Communications Industry Association (CCIA) and Intuit, the company that makes TurboTax, once again teamed together to offer free self tax preparation and electronic filing assistance for the Sacramento community this weekend. Through the Intuit Tax Freedom Project and the IRS Free File Alliance, roughly 47 million taxpayers are eligible to prepare and file their federal tax returns online for free with the TurboTax Freedom Edition.

Sacramento taxpayers who made \$30,000 or less and active-duty military took advantage of the **free, fast, private and easy** tax preparation event hosted by Asian Resources. Volunteers, including Intuit employees, helped participants prepare and file their tax returns with TurboTax Freedom Edition, an online tax software program that simplifies tax preparation and provides free electronic filing. Participants at all levels of computer expertise were welcomed as TurboTax is extremely easy to use.

TurboTax helps taxpayers get their biggest tax refund possible. The program assists people in learning more about how their finances work and empowers them to get every deduction to which they are entitled.

The events held at Asian Resources and the Broadway Career Center are part of an effort directed at taxpayers who meet any one of the following criteria:

- Earned \$30,000 Adjusted Gross Income or less in 2008; OR
- Qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit; OR
- Served as active duty military in 2008, including Reservists and National Guard, with a W-2 Form from the military and an adjusted gross income of \$56,000 or less.

Asian Resources opened their doors and offered their computers for the self tax preparation effort that provided taxpayers the direct opportunity to file their taxes on their own, a process many assume daunting and difficult, but can be a self empowering experience for many individuals once completed. This event complements the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program that Asian Resources has provided to the community for the past 18 years.

In times of national economic turmoil and with the state of California having to delay tax refunds, it is more important than ever for taxpayers to feel secure in taking control of their finances. Increasing their understanding of the tax process is an important part of doing that. Programs like TurboTax increase financial literacy by helping people understand—in simple language—many of the complexities of their own taxes and finances.

During Saturday and Sunday's events, a refund calculator automatically determined the amount of participants pending refunds, allowing them to walk away with an idea of how much money they'll receive in a few weeks. In addition, the online tax program helped taxpayers learn if they are eligible for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), a refundable tax credit which could help families get as much as \$4,800 back from the IRS this year. A new Earned Income Tax Calculator can quickly help all California taxpayers

see if they are eligible for the EITC by answering a few simple questions. This tool, created by Intuit, can be found at: <http://eitc.intuit.com/calctools/calctools.html?state=ca> and is available in English and Spanish.

Participants were also encouraged to visit First Lady Maria Shriver's WEConnect Web site and use the *WEb* Connector (<http://www.webconnector.net/WebConnector/>) tool to see if they qualify for California public benefit programs– i.e. the Earned Income Tax Credit, California's Alternative Rates for Energy, Low Cost Auto Insurance, the Golden State Advantage Card, etc. This online resource is hosted by the Intuit Financial Freedom Foundation and is part of First Lady Maria Shriver's campaign to connect Californians to resources that can put money in their pocket on a regular basis.

"Many Californians are looking for opportunities to stretch their dollars further this year and tax refunds will be a welcome relief providing urgent financial help to many individuals and families." said Ed Black, President & CEO of CCIA. "We're happy to assist Californians through the tax season and participation in Intuit's Tax Freedom Project helps taxpayers get the help they need to file their taxes accurately and ensure they'll get their refunds faster."

Intuit has offered low-income taxpayers free tax filing and preparation services since 1998, donating more than 18 million returns over the past 10 years.

"As a California company, we're committed to helping California taxpayers save money and take control of their finances. We think that's more important now than ever," said Dan Maurer, Senior Vice President, Intuit. "Online resources like TurboTax and programs like the Intuit Tax Freedom Project and the *WEb* Connector, assist in that process."

In the next few weeks, Intuit and CCIA will bring the Tax Freedom Project to Californians in Fresno, Sunnyvale and San Diego and has already held events in Los Angeles, Compton, San Jose and Oakland.

About CCIA:

CCIA is an international, nonprofit association of computer and communications industry firms, representing a broad cross section of the industry. CCIA is dedicated to preserving full, fair and open competition throughout our industry. Our members employ more than 600,000 workers and generate annual revenues in excess of \$200 billion.

About the Intuit Tax Freedom Project:

The Intuit Tax Freedom Project is a philanthropic initiative of the Intuit Financial Freedom Foundation. Through the Intuit Tax Freedom Project, Intuit donates use of TurboTax Online to individuals and families who meet eligibility criteria announced at the beginning of tax season. More than 18 million returns have been donated since this program began in 1998.

For more on the information on the project, visit: <http://turbotax.intuit.com/taxfreedom/index.jsp>

About Asian Resources:

Asian Resources, Inc. (ARI) is a non-profit community- based organization established in 1980 dedicated to providing multiple social services needed in our community, empowering everyone we serve to become a vital part of our changing diverse society. Twenty eight years later, the core of ARI's mission remains the same. Our commitment has broadened to provide a wide spectrum of social services not only to the low-income and limited English, youth, immigrants, and refugee communities in Sacramento, but also re-entry customers as well. ARI's wide range of programs and services enhance the quality of life and economic well-being of families throughout the Sacramento region. ARI's diverse staff offer culturally-sensitive programs and can read, write, and speak 12 different languages: Russian, Ukrainian, Bosnian, Armenian, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Croatian, Tagalog, Hmong, Serbian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.