

One volunteer's experience leads Austin company to give back

Two years ago, David Art had a simple idea for how to help low income families in Austin: use his experience filing his own taxes to help others do the same. "Filing taxes seems like such a huge block for so many people, and removing that is such an easy way to help," he recently said.

David wasn't sure how to move forward with his idea. Then a friend told him about Foundation Communities' Community Tax Center program. The program helps over 18,000 low income families and individuals file their taxes at no charge every year, recovering nearly \$30 million in tax refunds and putting money back into the local economy.

A little time saves working families big money

Last fall, David signed up as a tax preparation volunteer, and after getting trained by Foundation Communities staff he became a star volunteer. He ended up volunteering 120 hours and helping 48 families and individuals file their 2010 taxes. David's time made a huge impact: the people he helped received a total of over \$112,000 in refunds, \$44,845 in earned income tax credits, and \$7,200 in saved tax preparation fees.

"My volunteer experience with Foundation Communities was exceptional," David stated. "You get to interact with the people you are helping and get great feedback."



Helping re-ignite a spirit of community engagement at Spansion

David's company, Spansion, had a long history of community engagement and volunteerism when it was a division of computer chip maker AMD.

After being spun off as its own start-up, this company directive was lost in the re-organizational shuffle, but the spirit of helping others was not. When he started talking about his experience at Foundation Communities at work, David found many of his co-workers had continued to volunteer with the organizations they had worked with under AMD.

David decided to share his experience at the Community Tax Centers as a challenge to further engage Spansion employees. "For me it was easy to bring in Foundation Communities as a place for our company to volunteer," he continued. "Not only are the programs great, but I have been so impressed by how well run everything is."

David is excited to volunteer again in the coming tax season, this time with some of his co-workers. "The programs at Foundation Communities are nothing exotic, just simple effective tools that allow families to succeed."

Want to volunteer or get your company involved?

Contact Jackie Blair at 610-7377 or Jackie.Blair@foundcom.org

Bring holiday cheer to an Austin family

Will you help us bring a little holiday cheer to our residents who won't be able to fulfill their wish lists for food, clothing, books, and toys on their own? Here are two ways you can get involved and make a big difference this holiday season:

- 1. Sponsor a Foundation Communities family for the holidays.** It's a great way to engage your family, colleagues, friends, neighbors, fellow church members, or book club in a fun, rewarding group service activity. Please contact Chris Alberts at (512) 610.4008 or christopher.alberts@foundcom.org.
- 2. Spread the word about our holiday assistance program!** There's great need in our community. The more people who volunteer as holiday sponsors, the more families we can serve.



"Thank you so much for giving us a wonderful Christmas. It was a special day for my children and me."

– Veronica, FC resident and 2010 holiday program participant

Give the gift of HOME this holiday season

As a supporter, you already know that we have developed an innovative, proven model of housing and services. Quite simply, we do what works. We just need to do more of it.

Will you help us grow and serve more of our neighbors in need over the next year?

In 2012, we plan to expand by completing the renovation of Sierra Vista Apartments on South Congress, which will become a place to call home for 238 families, including 24 with children who were homeless or at high risk of homelessness. We will also begin renovating the old Suburban Lodge on I-35 and Oltorf to create Arbor Terrace, our next affordable community for single adults.

As you choose your holiday giving priorities this year, please consider making a contribution to Foundation Communities. Your tax deductible one time, monthly, or annual gift will help us serve more children at our after school programs, provide critical support services for our residents, and end homelessness for more families. **We've made it easy to give with the enclosed donation form or by visiting www.foundcom.org.**



We couldn't do our work without you. We are extremely grateful for your ongoing support.

Let your holiday giving provide a home and services for families to succeed

FC By the Numbers

- 1** LEED Platinum ranking M Station recently received as the greenest apartment complex in Texas
- 3.43** Average GPA of over 700 students who attend our after school programs at on-site Learning Centers
- 225** Number of children for whom we ended homelessness in 2011
- 931** How many Austinites we helped access federal student financial aid
- \$29,807,554** Total tax dollars refunded to over 18,000 low income families through free tax preparation services

"This whole web of services helps families stabilize, survive, and kiss the bad times goodbye."

-The Austin Chronicle Critics Pick, Best Affordable Housing Intervention



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"M Station...is a beautiful example of green-built compassion in action"

-The Austin Chronicle, Best of Austin 2011



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Foundation Communities is a local non-profit providing first class, affordable homes and support services for thousands of low-income families and individuals, empowering them with the tools they need to succeed.

We own and operate 16 properties in Austin and North Texas providing affordable homes to over 2,500 families, create enriched learning environments for over 700 children as well as ongoing adult education and financial coaching, and help over 18,000 low income residents file their taxes free of charge every year.