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USFSP Accounting Students Finish Successful Tax Season

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— From left to right: Colin Del Degan, Meleny Pla, Dr. Fellows, Irena Krasteva, Meghan McTavish, Sarah Smith, Marcella Butz, and Maria Babajanian.

As Tax Filing Day closed this year, USFSP Accounting students once again reached their lofty goals for civic engagement. Under the supervision of James Fellows, Ph.D., CPA, Professor of Accountancy, 25 students – 16 MBA students and 9 undergrads – completed an internship with the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Following training in tax law and tax preparation software, each internship student then completed a minimum of 75 hours of field work at various sites throughout Pinellas County preparing tax returns for low and moderate income taxpayers.

“USFSP has been participating in this program for 7 years,” said Dr. Fellows. “The program is particularly effective for students because it provides them not only the chance to serve their greater community, but also ‘real world’ experience in preparing tax returns and working with clients.”

This year’s cadre of students completed nearly 2,000 hours of tax preparation work, generating millions of dollars of tax refunds for the local community. Students receive three semester hours of credit for completing the internship. The Pinellas County IRS VITA program is

coordinated by the Pinellas Prosperity Partnership (PPP) in conjunction with the IRS, and includes 13 tax preparation sites throughout Pinellas County.

For more information about the VITA program and the internship at USFSP, please contact Professor James Fellows, fellows@mail.usf.edu

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