

News Release

Lifeline for the Empowerment and Development of Consumers, Inc.

PO Box 496, Painesville, OH 44077

(440) 354-2148 carried@lclifeline.org

**Lifeline, Inc. Recruiting Volunteers to Assist with New Income Tax Assistance Program
September 23, 2009**

PAINESVILLE, Ohio—Lifeline, Inc., Lake County's Community Action Agency, is currently recruiting volunteers to become trained to assist low to moderate income households with tax preparation next spring. In partnership with the IRS office in Cleveland, Lifeline and its volunteers will undergo varying levels of training, provided free of charge by the IRS.

Lifeline, Inc. will provide free tax assistance to our community beginning in January 2010 through the national Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA). The program trains volunteers to prepare simple federal and state tax returns for working families, elderly, and individuals with disabilities. Tax returns are prepared at no cost and training is free.

You can make a real difference in the lives of working families by helping them claim every tax benefit to which they are entitled. Since the EITC credit alone is worth as much as \$4,800, these benefits can boost a family's income by up to 35 percent. Tax payers who take advantage of this free tax assistance can save on tax preparation fees and receive fast refunds.

Anyone can volunteer. No tax accounting experience is necessary, only a desire to help others in need. Volunteers participate in a several training levels. Once certified, volunteers will be scheduled to assist with tax preparation January through April. Lifeline, Inc. will use computers to prepare and transmit tax returns. Other volunteer opportunities include volunteer greeter and volunteer screener.

For more information, please contact Michelle Mezaris, Consumer Education Coordinator at Lifeline, Inc., at 440-354-2148. Please contact Mezaris by Oct. 16, 2009 if you are interested in volunteering for the VITA Program!

Lifeline for the Empowerment and Development of Consumers was founded in 1973 with the mission of helping Lake County residents by providing them assistance and life skills programming that is designed to increase self-sufficiency. In 1980 Lifeline became a participating agency of the United Way of Lake County, UWLC, and in 1987 was designated a community action agency by the Ohio Department of Development, ODOD.

Today Lifeline continues with the same mission of helping Lake County's low-income residents break the cycle of poverty and make the transition from agency-dependency to self-sufficiency. Lifeline's current programming includes services in the health, housing, energy and consumer education areas. Our motto is 'first to help, then to teach.' Lifeline is currently funded by the UWLC and by grants through the ODOD, the City of Mentor, the Lake County Board of Commissioners, the Western Reserve Junior Service League, the CVS Foundation, the Ohio Housing Trust Fund, the Bikers Aiding Local Diabetics and through private donors.