

TravelTax Newsletter January 2019

We hope each of you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year. 2018 was a very eventful year with the changes to the tax laws and there will be a lot of surprises when people have their returns completed this year.

Our move is complete!

As many of you know, we moved our lives and operations to Greenville SC. This is not an unfamiliar place as Joseph grew up here and met Daina while she attended college in the area. Its been almost 30 years since Joseph and Daina left to begin their travel career. Why did we leave Nebraska? It wasn't easy. We had to build a new office from scratch and let some very good staff go. Brenda, Tiffany, Sarah and Tonya ran a remarkable office. However, as all parents of special needs children know, it can be very hard to find an educational environment that provides life skills as well as academics. With our youngest reaching high school, it required a more individualized instruction. We were already familiar with Hidden Treasure Christian School (www.hiddentreasure.org) in Greenville and after much prayer decided to move to allow our son to enroll. It is already proving to be the right decision even with such a big change in our lives.

Our new staff

Please welcome our new staff. Three of which we knew in college over 30 years ago! We will be posting their bios to our website and Facebook page over the next few weeks.

Donna Robinson	Operations Manager
Emily Green	Tax Associate / Accountant
Cathie Shaul	Receptionist
Timothy Wiggins	Documents Manager
Judith and Mark Kliewer	Data Entry
Nicole Burkett	Data Entry

Updated website

Our website has been treated to some needed upgrades and visual improvements. With an updated platform we have some other exciting items to add in the future 😊

We lowered our rates

Contrary to the trend of many tax professionals, we dropped our rates this year!!

Filing season craziness

The IRS has begun accepting electronically filed returns AND the deadline for filing has been extended till April 17. Never in the history of the US income tax has the filing deadline been extended for taxpayers nationwide. Its been extended in the past for natural disasters regionally, but this year, with the new laws and the government shutdown, all taxpayers will have 2 extra days to file without an extension.

Our workbooks are up

We are all set to start your returns. With the change in the tax rules, compliance is even more important as the IRS will find more creative ways to pick returns for audits

Refunds will be issued despite government shutdowns

Refunds will still be issued regardless of whether government is open for business

Don't fall for the refund advance schemes

Several chain preparation firms are offering refund advances – basically loans. In many ways this resurrects the old Rapid Refund programs that the IRS shot down. The programs vary, but many come with a bank fee or prep fee plus lots of solicitations.

Tax reform hits the tax forms

With tax reform, there are several changes to the forms and some additional ones. Schedules 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 have been introduced and the 1040 form looks completely different

Tax reform and job expenses

If you read our review of tax reform that we published last year you know that job expenses are no longer allowed as a deduction (until 2026) unless the individual is self-employed. However, several STATES will continue to allow employee job expenses on their returns. Our workbook continues to ask for these expenses to provide the best results at the state level.

State returns will need closer scrutiny

Several states have not adopted the Federal changes and there may be opportunities in itemizing at the state level even when its not beneficial at the Federal level.

Job expense deduction may return

Before the new Congress convened this month, a bill was introduced in the Senate and the House that would 1) make union dues deductible as an above the line deduction and 2) restore job expenses as an itemized deduction. It is uncertain if the bill will be introduced in the newly assembled Congress. Watch our blog for updates.

Many states take a cue from congress

Several states have lowered their personal and corporate tax rates in response to tax reform

Independent contracting for healthcare staffing professionals picks up steam

With the new pass through deduction for self employed and business owners, the interest in working as an independent contractor has increased. Most self-employed individuals are now only taxed on 80% of their net earnings at the Federal level. Self-employment in healthcare staffing still requires careful planning. Call us for a consultation and we can also connect you to individuals who can help you through the logistics.

Healthcare mandate is history

For 2019, an individual will no longer incur a penalty for not carrying health insurance. Employers are still required to provide coverage when meeting certain levels of employees.

IRS gives self-employed a slight reprieve

For self employed and other individuals required to make estimated payments, the IRS is waiving penalties for those that pay in at least 85% of their tax liability by 1/15/19

Government Shutdown

A lot of people are asking about what the government shutdown is doing to tax filings. We covered some of that already but filing, payment processing and refunds continue as normal. However, during the shutdown the IRS is not answering the phones, receiving faxes, processing amended returns or processing audits. As of today, the government is reopening, but the current funding bill is temporary so we may see another one soon.

Add student loan delinquencies to the list of professional license killers

FL received attention for more than sunshine in the winter. FL licensing boards have begun suspending professional licenses when there is a student loan default that goes unchecked. Already, several states will suspend licenses for tax delinquencies.

More staffing agencies offering HSAs

One of the most tax savvy ways to approach health insurance is by utilizing a High Deductible Health Plan coupled with a Health Savings Account (HSA). Few healthcare staffing agencies have offered this due to the administrative logistics involved. More agencies are offering them now and of course, one can always obtain their own policy.

Whenever there is a question, feel free to call!

Whenever you have a tax questions or even a question about your contract, feel free to contact us. With our new office arrangement, we have expanded our pipeline to better serve you. Compliance is more important than ever.

Canada Revenue Agency Scam

Several Canadian taxpayers have received scam calls from 800 831 1026. This is not a CRA number and like the scam calls in the US, hanging up is a good response.

Upcoming ASA webinar presentations

Maintaining a Tax Home and Employer Compliance - Jan 29

Website is: <https://americanstaffing.net/education-certification/asa-webinars/>

Regular Tax Talk Meet and Greets coming to Greenville

If you are in the Greenville SC area, join us for our upcoming Meet and Greet Tax Talks for Travelers at the Commerce Club downtown. Watch our website, blog or newsletter for the announcements

Videos coming to the website

We will begin posting educational videos for travelers, agencies, expats and other focus clients soon

TravelTax at Travel Healthcare Travelers Take Omaha Conference

Donna Robinson and Sara Turay will be in Omaha for the Healthcare Travelers Take Omaha Conference April 5- 6. The website is

TravelTax at the CNA Travelers Conference

Joe and the staff will be at the 2nd annual CAN Travelers Conference in Daytona Beach, July 18-21

Don't forget the Travelers Conference

Keep your calendar cleared to attend the 12th annual Travelers Conference in Las Vegas, September 8-10. This is the premiere convention for traveling healthcare professionals.

Have a great January!

TravelTax
TravelTax Canada
46 St Mark Rd, Taylors SC 29687
402.379.7818
info@traveltax.com
www.traveltax.com