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# Broadband and Civic Empowerment Curriculum

Session 3: Tax Preparation & Financial Security

Prepared by

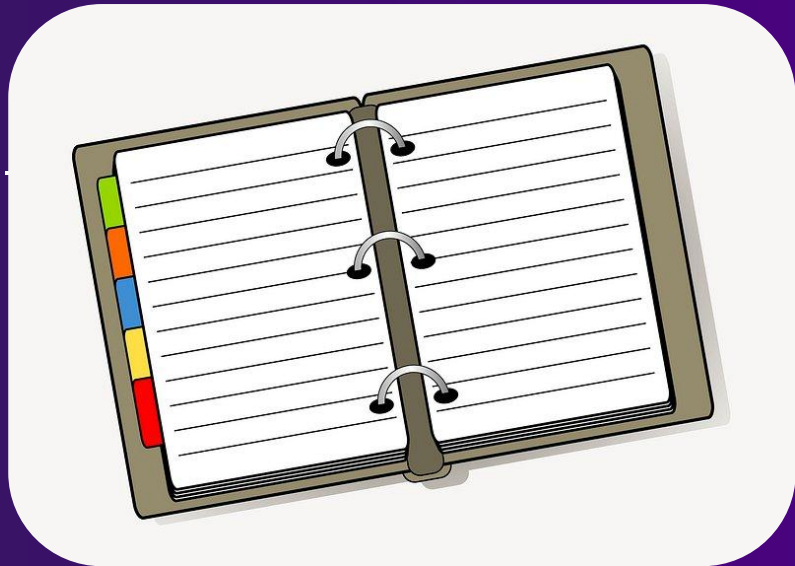
- University of Illinois - Community Data Clinic
- Cunningham Township Supervisor's Office
- Housing Authority of Champaign County
- Project Success of Vermillion County
- Urbana Public Library

# Session Outline

Purpose	General questions	Activities / Research technique
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess participant's broadband interests and experiences in tax preparation and personal finances</li> <li>Get a better sense of what community members need? Or new programs to share with them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The last time you made a significant expense? How did you plan it? Did you use any internet resources to make a budget or follow these expenses?</b></li> <li><b>How do you prepare your taxes? Does someone in your household help you with it?</b></li> <li>Are you familiar with credit scores? Have you ever checked or used your credit score?</li> <li>Do you use any kind of app, website, or device to access personal finances, budgeting or tax preparation?</li> <li>What failures/challenges are you experiencing with these services?</li> <li>Do you use social media to know about personal finances?</li> <li>Are there any programs or services you would recommend to other community members?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semi-structured interview with guided questions</li> <li>Present the resource to the participant.</li> <li>Have you ever used this resource?</li> </ul>

# Session Agenda

1. Check-in from previous meeting
2. Review Resources
  - a. Tax Preparation
  - b. Tax Information / Services for Non-English Speakers
  - c. Financial Management
  - d. Additional Resources
    - Financial Budgeting
    - How to Avoid Scams
3. Announcements for next meeting



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# Tax Preparation Resources



# Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program | Salt and Light

## About:

- Starting February 1st
- The University of Illinois' VITA program offers FREE tax assistance. Potential donation requested by service administration. Please verify
  - Low- to moderate-income (gross income less than \$60,000),
  - Elderly (over age 60),
  - Limited English speaking taxpayers
  - Those with disabilities.

## Location:

- Salt & Light (1819 Philo Road, Urbana)

## Contact information

- Call 217-300-4784
- Email [vita@business.illinois.edu](mailto:vita@business.illinois.edu).
- Website: <https://giesbusiness.illinois.edu/accountancy/vita-program>

## Do You Have?

- ✓ **Photo ID for yourself and your spouse**  
*(your spouse must be present if you plan to file a joint return)*
- ✓ **Social security cards or ITIN letters for yourself, your spouse, and all dependents**
- ✓ **All tax forms you received such as Form W-2 and Form 1099**
- ✓ **Form 1098-T if you are a college student**
- ✓ **Real estate taxes paid and PIN number if you own your home**



Gies Business





# Tax-Aide, Senior Services of Champaign County

## About

- Service is offered yearly February 1 - April 18.
- Free service can answer most of the tax issues faced by middle- and low-income taxpayers
- Ages 60 and older.
- Volunteers are trained by the IRS, through a Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) grant.
- Multiple Locations in IL

## Service Location Finder:

- [https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp\\_taxaide/locations.html](https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/locations.html)

## Champaign Main Public Library

- Tue, Thur, Friday 09:15 AM - 04:30 PM
- Saturday 09:15 am - 01:00 pm
- 200 W Green St, Champaign, IL, 61820
- Appointment Required | Call (217) 359-6500

## Rantoul Public Library

- Mon, Thur 9 AM -12 PM, 1 PM - 4PM
- 106 W Flessner Ave, Rantoul, IL, 61866
- Appointment Required | Call (217) 893-3955

## Decatur Macon County Senior Center

- Mon - Friday 8:30 am - 12 PM
- 1430 N 22nd St, Decatur, IL, 62526-5106
- Appointment Required | Call (217)429-1239

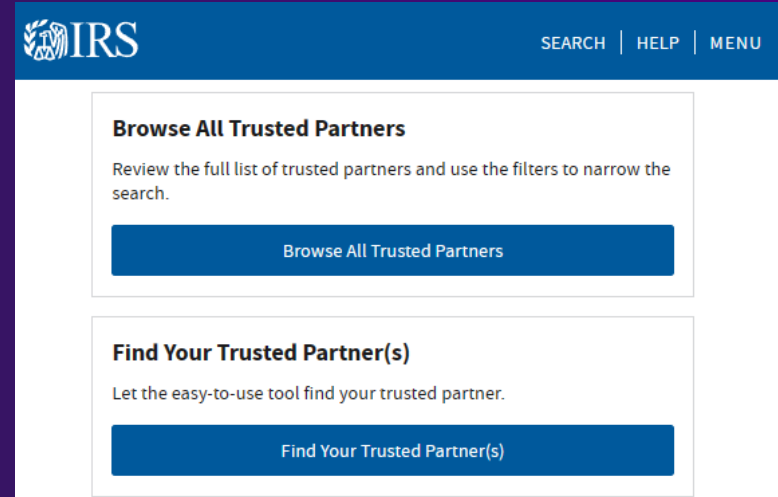
# IRS Free File Guided Tax Preparation Options

## About

- Do your taxes online for free with an IRS Free File provider.
- If your adjusted gross income (AGI) was \$73,000 or less, review each provider's offer to make sure you qualify.
- Some offers include a free state tax return.

## What you Need

- Income statements like W2s or 1099s
- Adjustments to income
- Dependent and spouse information, if applicable
- Prior Year AGI or Prior Year Self-Select PIN



## Browse All Service Providers

- <https://apps.irs.gov/app/freeFile/browse-all-offers/>

## IRS Free File Online Lookup Tool

- <https://apps.irs.gov/app/freeFile/general/>

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# Tax information/ Services for Non-English Speakers



# The Refugee Center | Centro de Refugiados

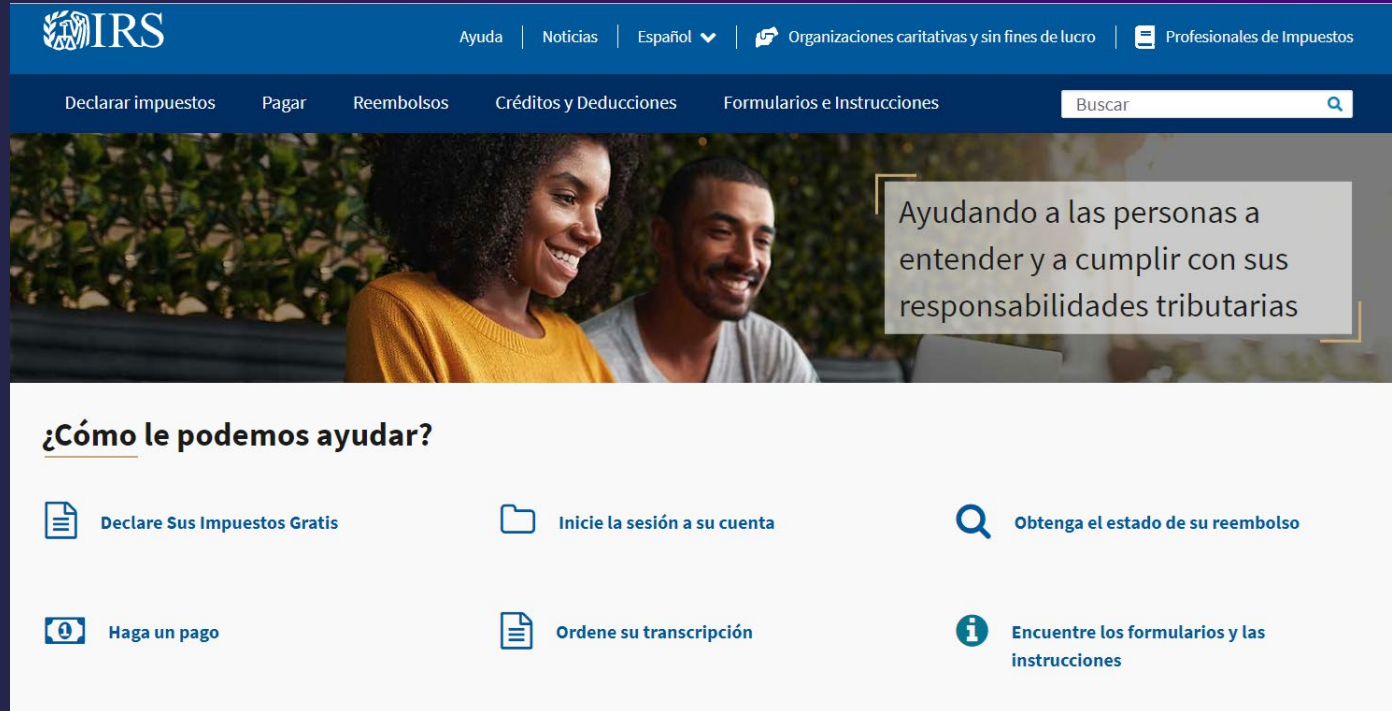
## Services Provided

1. Social Services
  - a. Case Management and Counseling
  - b. Tutoring and opportunities for children
  - c. Health Education Programs
2. Mediation Services
  - a. Provides an interpreter for you job, doctor visit, school appointments, etc.
  - b. Help applying for government benefits
3. Language Assistance
  - a. Help with paperwork for citizenship, asylum, residency and other immigration issues
  - b. Translations in English, Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Russian, Cantonese, Mandarin



- Location:
  - 201 West Kenyon Road, Suite 4D  
Champaign, IL United States 61820
- Email: [admin@ecirmac.org](mailto:admin@ecirmac.org)
- Phone: 217-344-8455
- Office open 9am-5pm M-F or by appointment
- Website: <https://www.therefugeecenter-cu.org/>

# EL IRS en Español



The screenshot shows the IRS website interface in Spanish. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with the IRS logo on the left and links for 'Ayuda', 'Noticias', 'Español' (with a dropdown arrow), 'Organizaciones caritativas y sin fines de lucro', and 'Profesionales de Impuestos'. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for 'Declarar impuestos', 'Pagar', 'Reembolsos', 'Créditos y Deducciones', and 'Formularios e Instrucciones', followed by a search bar labeled 'Buscar'. The main content area features a large image of a smiling couple looking at a laptop. Overlaid on the right side of this image is a white text box with the message: 'Ayudando a las personas a entender y a cumplir con sus responsabilidades tributarias'. Below the image, the heading '¿Cómo le podemos ayudar?' is followed by six service tiles arranged in two rows. Each tile contains an icon and a text label: a document icon for 'Declare Sus Impuestos Gratis', a folder icon for 'Inicie la sesión a su cuenta', a magnifying glass icon for 'Obtenga el estado de su reembolso', a wallet icon for 'Haga un pago', a document with a checkmark icon for 'Ordene su transcripción', and an information icon for 'Encuentre los formularios y las instrucciones'.

**IRS**

Ayuda | Noticias | Español ▼ | Organizaciones caritativas y sin fines de lucro | Profesionales de Impuestos

Declarar impuestos | Pagar | Reembolsos | Créditos y Deducciones | Formularios e Instrucciones

Buscar 🔍

Ayudando a las personas a entender y a cumplir con sus responsabilidades tributarias

**¿Cómo le podemos ayudar?**

- 📄 Declare Sus Impuestos Gratis
- 📁 Inicie la sesión a su cuenta
- 🔍 Obtenga el estado de su reembolso
- 💰 Haga un pago
- 📄 Ordene su transcripción
- ℹ️ Encuentre los formularios y las instrucciones

Website: <https://www.irs.gov/es>

# Financial Management Resources

A composite image with a purple overlay. It features a black calculator with yellow 'CE' and 'ON/C' buttons, a pair of glasses, a pen, and a sticky note. The background includes a bar chart and a pie chart with percentage labels like '5%', '4%', and '8%'.

FINANCIAL  
MANAGEMENT

# Why is credit score important?

## 4 Credit Score Myths

### How Your Credit Score Affects Your Buying Power

The higher your credit score, the lower your interest rate, and ultimately your monthly mortgage payment.

FICO® Score	APR	Monthly Payment
760-850	4.170%	\$1,462
620-639	5.759%	\$1,752

30-year fixed-rate / \$300,000 loan

**Excellent**  
800-850

**Very Good**  
740-799

**Good**  
670-739

**Fair**  
580-669

**Very Bad**  
300-579

### THINGS TO AVOID NOT TO DAMAGE YOUR CREDIT

1. Do not miss payments
2. Do not overspend with credit
3. Positive credit history cards are better not to close
4. Do not apply for loans too often
5. Do not rely on credit cards to much



## | Money Matters Financial Education Classes

### About:

- Heartland Bank Money Matters Program has classes to assist you in building or repairing your personal credit.

### In-person Class Dates ([link here](#))

Champaign County Regional Planning Commission -  
1776 E. Washington St.

- Tuesday, Feb 20 5:30 – 7:00pm
- Tuesday, May 28 5:30 – 7:00pm

(Peoria, IL) METEC – 2605 W. Krause Ave.

- Tuesday, Feb 13 5:30 – 7:00pm
- Tuesday, March 12 5:30 – 7:00pm

### Online Classes

- [Sign-up link](#)
- Tuesday, Jan 30th 5:30 – 7:00pm
- Tuesday, Feb 27 5:30 – 7:00pm
- Tuesday, March 26 5:30 – 7:00pm
- Tuesday, April 30th 5:30 – 7:00pm

### Contact information

- Cal( 217) 378-7100 (Ext 5061)

Website: <https://www.hbtbank.com/money-matters-financial-education-classes#champaign>

### Other Resources:

FDIC Financial Education Center

- Topics
  - Buying a Home
  - Borrowing Basics
  - Managing Debt
  - Building Savings

### Website:

<https://playmoneysmart.fdic.gov/games>



# Credit Repair/Builder Loan Program

- Money Matters Small Dollar Loan Program at Heartland Bank
- Building or repairing individuals' personal credit
- Loans ranges between \$500 and \$1,500
- Credit is built as on-time monthly payments
- Requirements:
  - Designed for a single borrower only.
  - Proof of identity, address, and 6 months verifiable income.
  - Certificate of Completion from a Money Matters Financial Education Class
  - Money Matters Financial Education Class: A 1.5-hour class offered online as well as in-person in Bloomington, Champaign, Chicago (completamente en español), Peoria
- More information: <https://www.hbtbank.com/credit-repair-builder-loan-program>



# MyCommunity Home Loan

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- Assist individuals who may not qualify for traditional banking products but hope to own a home
- Special loan terms and qualifications to build a record of payment, as well as benefits for the mortgage process.
- Lower down payment requirements
- No mortgage insurance premiums
- Do not need to be first-time homebuyer
- Compatible with down payment assistance programs and gift from a family member
- Eligibility:
  - The borrower and co-borrower must complete homebuyer education.
  - Total annual household income must be below 80% of the HUD income limits, or home must be in the low-to-moderate income communities.
- <https://www.busey.com/mortgage/products-and-services/mycommunity-home-loan>





- A non-profit organization formed in 1974 with a mission to provide consumers with the financial education and debt relief options needed to ensure they are on the right path to financial freedom.
- Focused on Credit Building, Debt Relief, and Housing Assistance
- FREE debt analysis and talk with a financial coach for:
  - Review participant finances.
  - Discuss debt relief options
  - Create an action plan
- Call to 1 (800) 431 – 8157

<https://credit.org/>



# Credit Karma Free Credit Monitor

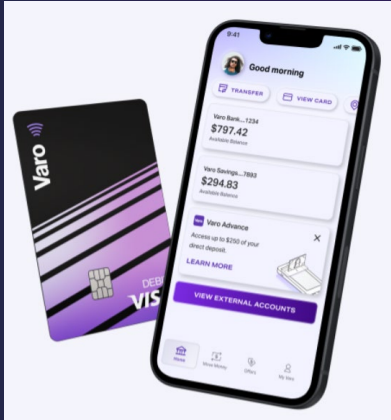
- Get FREE credit monitoring on your mobile or laptop
- Receive notifications when important changes to your credit reports happen.
- Spot errors, inconsistencies or signs of identity theft on your credit reports
- Find assistance to dispute errors on your credit report
- Receive alerts if your information has been exposed in a data breach
- Works for Equifax or TransUnion but not FICO



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-ND

<https://www.creditkarma.com/credit-monitoring>

# Easy Banking: Varo Bank



- All-mobile bank account app
- Education service for adults/families
  - Smart Money Basics
  - Owning a Home
  - Small Business Essentials



No credit check



No minimum balance



No monthly fees



No overdraft fees — we help you spend only what you have<sup>1</sup>



55k+ fee-free Allpoint ATMs in places you already shop at: Target, CVS, and Safeway<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.varomoney.com>

# Passbook



Passbook is a new way to store, spend, and send money, designed specifically for immigrants living and working in the United States.

- Fund your account with mobile check deposit, cash deposit, or bank account transfers. All with no minimum deposit requirements.
- Get \$2 cash back when you send money internationally using Remitly.
- Use everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted, even for car rentals and hotels.
- Get cash back with purchase at retail stores, or access any of over 2M ATMs worldwide.

<https://www.passbook.app/>



## **WHAT'S A BUDGET?**

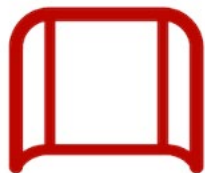
A game plan for telling your money what to do.

## **WHY'S BUDGETING IMPORTANT?**

Reduce stress at the end of the month

Avoid debt

Avoid living paycheck to paycheck



## **WHAT'S THE GOAL OF MAKING A BUDGET**

Reduce stress at the end of the month

Avoid debt

Avoid living paycheck to paycheck

Accomplish your goals

Retire with dignity



## **BUDGETING MYTHS**

I can't buy what I want

There's too much math

I don't plan purchases

<https://nursemoneytalk.com/>

# Free Budget Spreadsheets and Budget tips

- Tracking several monthly expenses can make managing your money a little easier or planning for special projects
- Online form to input your monthly income and a wide range of expenses —so you don't miss anything.
- 50/30/20 budget breakdown (50% toward needs, 30% toward wants and 20% toward savings and debt repayment)
- <https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/finance/free-budget-spreadsheets-templates>

# TOP 5 SCAMS

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**E-Commerce Scam**



**Job Scam**



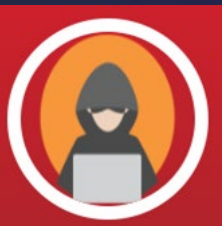
**Non-Banking  
Related Phishing  
Scam**



**Investment Scam**



**Banking Related  
Phishing Scam**



## **IMPERSONATION SCAM: SPECIAL RISK AT TAX RETURN TIME!**

This scam usually involves a phone call or in-app call (e.g., WhatsApp) from someone claiming to be a local government official (e.g., government official, police officer or court official), staff from a bank or telco

# How to Avoid IRS Scams: Dos & Dots

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## Dos:

- Beware if someone calls claiming to be from the IRS. The IRS will always contact you by mail before calling you about unpaid taxes.
- Ask the caller to provide their name, badge number, and callback number.
  - Then call TIGTA at 1-800-366-4484 to find out if the caller is an IRS employee
  - If you confirm that the caller is from the IRS, call them back. Otherwise, report the scam call to TIGTA.
- Become familiar with what fraudulent IRS email messages look like.
- Verify the number of the letter, form, or notice on the IRS website.
- Be suspicious of threats. The IRS won't threaten to have police arrest you for not paying a bill.

# How to Avoid IRS Scams: Dos & Don'ts

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## Don't:

- Don't give in to demands to pay money immediately.
- Be especially suspicious of demands to wire money or pay with a prepaid debit card.
- Don't trust the name or phone number on a caller ID display that shows "IRS."
  - Scammers often change the name that shows on caller ID using a technique called spoofing.
- Don't click on any links in email or text messages to verify your information.



# How to Report Fraud



## How it works



**Tell us what happened**  
Report a scam, a company, or  
an unwanted call.



**Get your next steps**  
Find out what you can do  
to protect yourself.



**Help stop fraud**  
We use and share reports  
with our law enforcement  
partners to help with  
investigations.

Website: <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/>



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**Do you know any programs or  
services you would recommend  
to other community members?**

# More resources shared by our participants



**Feria de Empleo del Distrito Escolar de Urbana**

Febrero 15 de 2023  
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
Urbana Middle School  
1201 S. Vine St.  
Urbana IL 61801

¡Estamos contratando para estas posiciones!

- Maestro/a
- Maestro/a Suplente
- Maestro/a de Apoyo
- Secretaria
- Líder de Recreación ASCCP
- Coordinador/a de sitio ASCCP
- Profesional de Terrenos para el Distrito
- Defensor/a del compromiso estudiantil
- Supervisor del Comedor
- Administrador de Sistemas

Además Entrevistas en el sitio

Nuevos Salarios competitivos

Horarios de Trabajo convenientes

**¡ÚNETE A NUESTRO DISTRITO!!**

Para mayor información, por favor visite

**WWW.USD116.ORG/EMPLOYMENT**

1-202-384-3600 | hr@usd116.org | www.usd116.org

Urbana School District #16  
Employment Opportunities  
<https://usd116.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx>

Free healthcare for  
the uninsured & underinsured (18+)  
Open Sundays 1-4pm (CUPHD Building)  
201 W Kenyon Rd, Champaign, IL 61820  
Patient & appointment line: (309) 306-1358  
<https://www.avicennahealth.org/>



**vicenna**  
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER  
*Serving humanity, one person at a time*

**CUIDADO DE SALUD GRATIS**  
ABIERTO LOS DOMINGOS  
1-4PM

SITUADO EN EL SÓTANO DE CUPHD

**ACEPTAMOS CON CITA Y SIN CITA**

- Servicios de atención
- Exámenes
- Diagnóstico, prevención y educación
- Prescripción de medicamentos, pruebas y vacunas
- Exámenes de la piel, audición, visión y otros
- Servicios de diagnóstico, diagnóstico y tratamiento
- Medicina preventiva

201 W. Kenyon Rd, Champaign  
309.306.1358  
info@vicennahealth.org

# Passbook



Passbook is a new way to store, spend, and send money, designed specifically for immigrants living and working in the United States.

- Fund your account with mobile check deposit, cash deposit, or bank account transfers. All with no minimum deposit requirements.
- Get \$2 cash back when you send money internationally using Remitly.
- Use everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted, even for car rentals and hotels.
- Get cash back with purchase at retail stores, or access any of over 2M ATMs worldwide.

<https://www.passbook.app/>



## Credit Builder Loan

- Credit builder loans are typically \$1,000 or less.
- Loan amount you borrow is set aside in a secured savings account or certificate of deposit (CD)
- Make fixed payments to achieve a goal, typically 6 to 24 months
- Credit is built as on-time monthly payments
- When the balance is paid off in full, you will have access to the money minus any interest and fees
- Set a realistic monthly budget to make sure you can make on-time payments!
- Benefits:
  - Easier to qualify than traditional loans
  - Loans help establish and build credit over time
  - Can help you to build savings
- More information: <https://www.self.inc/>

# Acknowledgements

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Participants of the Broadband READY Phase 2 YOU!

## Community Organizations

- Danielle Chynoweth and Jessica Black, Cunningham Township Supervisor's Office
- Kimberly David, Project Success of Vermillion County
- Stephanie Burnett, Housing Authority of Champaign County

**Thank you!**

**For more information, please visit <https://communitydata.illinois.edu>**



# Thank you!

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