June 2014

Dear Business Leader,

Did you know you can support the Bucks County Historical Society’s Mercer Museum and possibly receive a 75% or 90% tax credit for your business contribution?

The Commonwealth has budgeted millions in educational improvement tax credits (EITC) for businesses that contribute to qualified Educational Improvement Organizations.

Your tax dollars stay in your community!

The Bucks County Historical Society is eligible to receive business contributions through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Program of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. As a qualified Educational Improvement Organization (EIO), the Historical Society’s Mercer Museum provides innovative programs, including National History Day and the Museum Apprentice Program, which enhance the curriculum and academic programs of our region’s school districts.

Key points about the EITC program:

- Entities eligible to apply for EITC are operating businesses authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that are subject to one or more of the following taxes: Corporate Net Income Tax, Capital Stock Franchise Tax, Bank and Trust Company Shares Tax, Title Insurance Companies Shares Tax, Insurance Premiums Tax, Mutual Thrift Institution Tax, Insurance Company Law of 1921, Personal Income Tax of S corporation shareholders or Partnership partners.

- A business approved for the EITC program will receive the credit equal to 75% of its contribution(s) to approved organization(s), up to a maximum of $750,000 per taxable year. The tax credit may be increased to 90% of the contribution(s) if the business agrees to provide the same amount of contribution for two consecutive tax years.

Businesses apply for the tax credit program via the EITC state website: www.newpa.com/eitc

Tax credit applications will be processed on a first-come-first-served basis by day submitted. Applications will be approved until the amount of available tax credits is exhausted.

Support the Mercer Museum’s vital educational programs benefitting our community’s schools, and in return, receive tax credits for your business. It’s a perfect partnership that makes business and community sense. If you have any questions, please call Laura Biersmith, V.P. of Development, at 215-345-0210 ext. 129.

Sincerely,

Douglas Dolan
Executive Director
MERCER MUSEUM...EITC REFERENCE SHEET

Overview

➢ Tax credits to eligible businesses contributing to an Educational Improvement Organization (EIO), Scholarship Organization, and/or a Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship Organization.

Eligibility

➢ Operating businesses authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that are subject to one or more of the following taxes: Corporate Net Income Tax, Capital Stock Franchise Tax, Bank and Trust Company Shares Tax, Title Insurance Companies Shares Tax, Insurance Premiums Tax, Mutual Thrift Institution Tax, Insurance Company Law of 1921, Personal Income Tax of S corporation shareholders or Partnership partners.

Key Points for Application Process

▪ For Fiscal Year 2014-2015, all applications must be submitted electronically through the EITC website: www.newpa.com/eitc.

▪ The Mercer Museum is listed as the Bucks County Historical Society on the state register of approved Educational Improvement Organizations (EIO).

▪ To support the Mercer Museum’s National History Day and Museum Apprentice Program, your business needs to select the Educational Improvement Organization (EIO) category as one of the types of commitment for your business.

▪ Your business can contribute to more than one category such as the Educational Improvement Organization and Scholarship categories, and to do so, two separate online applications need to be completed.

▪ Selecting the 2-year commitment, will entitle your business, if awarded tax credits, to a 90% tax credit for each year in which the contributions are made.

▪ Each company's tax situation is different, so you should consult your tax preparer.

Business Application Submission Timelines

July 1 – All businesses applying for 1-year commitment,

Questions

▪ If you have any questions, please call Laura Biersmith, V.P. of Development at Mercer Museum, 215-345-0210 ext. 129.
National History Day- Through this nationwide program, more than a half million middle and high school students annually undertake original research on a topic of their choice. Students who enter the History Day competition engage in a rigorous learning process – outside of their normal classroom experiences – that exposes them to original and primary sources, exercises their powers of analysis and interpretation, and subjects their work to both praise and criticism through the judging process. The students conduct extensive primary and secondary research via libraries, archives, museums, oral history interviews and the exploration of historic sites. The students present their work in a variety of media – including papers, websites, documentary videos, performances and exhibits.

The Mercer Museum serves as regional coordinator for the History Day competition in Bucks and Montgomery Counties. The Museum provides the competition entry materials; recruits participants; conducts teacher workshops; assists teachers in understanding the rules, themes and procedures; recruits and assembles judges; coordinates the competition; and often conducts presentations in classrooms and at teacher meetings. The Museum currently works with Ursinus College to provide facilities for the regional competition, though most of the costs for promotion and logistics are borne entirely by the Mercer Museum. Participating school districts include Central Bucks, Council Rock, Hatboro-Horsham, Pennridge and Quakertown in Bucks County; and Souderton, Jenkintown and Methacton Districts in Montgomery County. Additional schools include Abington Friends, Ancillae Asumpta Academy, Gwynedd Mercy Academy Elementary and Souderton Charter School Collaborative.

Museum Apprentice Program (MAP)- This program is directed primarily toward high school students in the Central Bucks School District. “MAP” is designed to offer teen volunteers (generally ages 15-18) an opportunity to work in a museum environment while developing leadership, communication, and research skills useful for life beyond high school. Members of MAP volunteer at least 5 hours a month assisting at family and youth programs, and (depending on interest and need) participating in a variety of service activities, research projects, collections initiatives, and other events.

Annually, the Mercer Museum accepts from 7 to 10 students into MAP. Museum education staff members create an individualized experience or learning plan for each student that takes into account student needs and interests as well as the needs of the institution. Typically, the students work on projects that benefit them, while at the same time advancing or supporting specific museum programs and initiatives. MAP offers each student a well-rounded experience that exposes him or her to a variety of challenges, skills and learning opportunities. Education staff members supervising the program ensure that the students are exposed to all areas of museum operations during their MAP tenure, including collections, development, marketing and public relations, as well as education. By the time students leave the program they generally have contributed anywhere from 50 to 150 hours of volunteer service. At the same time the students have gained direct, hands-on experience in a professional setting; presenting programs, engaging the public, working with collections staff.