



On The Inside

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November 11, 2011

VETERANS DAY MESSAGE

As a veteran, Robert Hanson, and Washington Institute would like to express gratitude for the sacrifice and dedicated service of military personnel and all veterans.

In 2012, Many Tax Benefits Increase Due to Inflation Adjustments

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For tax year 2012, personal exemptions and standard deductions will rise and tax brackets will widen due to inflation. Please read further to see which inflationary measures may affect returns next year:

By law, the dollar amounts for a variety of tax provisions, affecting virtually every taxpayer, must be revised each year to keep pace with inflation. New dollar amounts affecting 2012 returns, filed by most taxpayers in early 2013, include the following:

- The value of each personal and dependent exemption, available to most taxpayers, is \$3,800, up \$100 from 2011.
- The new standard deduction is \$11,900 for married couples filing a joint return, up \$300, \$5,950 for singles and married individuals filing separately, up \$150, and \$8,700 for heads of household, up \$200. Nearly two out of three taxpayers take the standard deduction, rather than itemizing deductions, such as mortgage interest, charitable contributions and state and local taxes.
- Tax-bracket thresholds increase for each filing status. For a married couple filing a joint return, for example, the taxable-income threshold separating the 15-percent bracket from the 25-percent bracket is \$70,700, up from \$69,000 in 2011.

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Here We Grow Again...

News, Events, and Happenings

News

- **Course Updates:**

The following courses have been scheduled for update or will soon be released. More information about their availability and release dates will be coming soon:

600 – Introduction to US Taxation

603 – Business Expenses, Deductions, and Credits II (Formerly Tax Accounting)

708 – Navigating International Taxes

- **New Certificate Offering!**

Principles of Personal Excellence:

Keys to Success in Any Life Arena

The school is very excited to announce a new partnership with **The Institute of Applied Human Excellence** to offer a comprehensive, certificate-based course designed to facilitate success within any meaningful life arena by providing the essential principles, practices, current research and tools to maximize personal and professional effectiveness and satisfaction. *(Please see the article on page 4 for more information about this wonderful new course available soon!)*

Highlights

Washington Institute for Graduate Studies wants to thank attendees, planners, and all those involved in recent events that the school participated in. They were wonderful successes! Thank you all!

- **Navigating International Taxes**

October 20, 2011

Please contact **Student Services** for more information regarding ordering your copy of this seminar for CPE/CLE credit at studentservices@wsltax.org.

- **AICPA National Conference - Washington D.C.**

November 7-8, 2011

- **Utah NATP Conference**

November 10, 2011

Spotlight...

Washington Institute for Graduate Studies' spotlights some of our amazing students, staff members or faculty. It's a great way to get to know the people who make this institution the success that it is.

Holly Carlin-MST Alumni

Washington Institute for Graduate Studies Alumnus Holly Carlin is from Union, New Jersey – a hop, skip, and a Hudson (River) away from New York City. Although she calls Park City, Utah home now, she spent a bit of time around the country earning college degrees from Indiana State University, Weber State College in Ogden, Utah, and from wherever she was in 1999, a Masters Degree in Taxation from Washington Institute.

Along her life path, Holly made a relatively common decision. She decided that she needed to make money. So, at a professor's suggestion, she pursued an accounting degree. Holly earned her B.S. in Accounting from Weber State in 1984 and passed her CPA exam in 1986. Although she said that if she weren't involved in taxes at all, she'd like to be a Life Coach.

Holly has worked as CFO for the County of Salt Lake (Salt Lake City, Utah), and decided to open her own office in 1998. She decided it would be a tax practice, so her MST from Washington Institute was a "perfect" addition to her strong educational background, and real-world experience.

Holly applied to be a member of the IRS Information Reporting Program Advisory Committee (IRPAC) in 2006. At the time, only 8 positions were available on the committee and she was selected from a nationwide pool of applicants. In 2007 she chaired the sub-group Wage & Investment, which meets 5 times a year in Washington D.C. and offers a final report each year to the Commissioner of the IRS.

Holly has two grown sons who both received college educations, and who also love the outdoors and especially love to ski. (Snow or water, it may not matter!) Of all her accomplishments, Holly is most proud of her boys.

Next up for Holly? "I'm going to study for the Tax Court Exam." The rigorous and highly challenging exam is only offered every two years, and it will be administered next in Washington D.C. in November 2012. With pass rates that range between 5%-10%, she'll have her work cut out for her. Luckily, Holly describes herself as tenacious, driven, caring, intelligent, and well-traveled. These qualities will serve her well as she prepares for, and takes the grueling exam.

All of us at Washington Institute for Graduate Studies are grateful to have been part of Holly's educational journey, and we're sending a big wish for additional success in all her upcoming efforts!

...continued from page 1: **In 2012, Many Tax Benefits Increase Due to Inflation Adjustments**

Credits, deductions, and related phase outs.

- For tax year 2012, the maximum earned income tax credit (EITC) for low- and moderate- income workers and working families rises to \$5,891, up from \$5,751 in 2011. The maximum income limit for the EITC rises to \$50,270, up from \$49,078 in 2011. The credit varies by family size, filing status and other factors, with the maximum credit going to joint filers with three or more qualifying children.
- The foreign earned income deduction rises to \$95,100, an increase of \$2,200 from the maximum deduction for tax year 2011.
- The modified adjusted gross income threshold at which the lifetime learning credit begins to phase out is \$104,000 for joint filers, up from \$102,000, and \$52,000 for singles and heads of household, up from \$51,000.
- For 2012, annual deductible amounts for Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs) increased from the tax year 2011 amounts; please see the following table:

Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs)	Self-only coverage	Family coverage
Minimum annual deductible	\$2,100	\$4,200
Maximum annual deductible	\$3,150	\$6,300
Maximum annual out-of-pocket expenses	\$4,200	\$7,650

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Navigating International Taxes

This timely seminar held at the law offices of Kirton & McConkie in beautiful, downtown Salt Lake City, Utah was a great success and we are pleased to announce that a video recording of the seminar will soon be available for students to order. Covering broad topics involving International Taxation in the United States, it is a helpful introduction to a complicated subject. The course will be available to order very soon, and will offer 5.5 CPE and 4.5 CLE credits. Please contact Student Services at studentservices@wsltax.org for more information on how to order your copy of the course and included textbook!



L-R: Paul Savage, Attorney and Shareholder at Kirton & McConkie; David Kerzner, Seminar Leader and Distinguished Speaker; Robert Hanson, President, Washington Institute for Graduate Studies.

The \$2,500 maximum deduction for interest paid on student loans begins to phase out for a married taxpayers filing a joint returns at \$125,000 and phases out completely at \$155,000, an increase of \$5,000 from the phase out limits for tax year 2011. For single taxpayers, the phase out ranges remain at the 2011 levels.

Estate and Gift

For an estate of any decedent dying during calendar year 2012, the basic exclusion from estate tax amount is \$5,120,000, up from \$5,000,000 for calendar year 2011. Also, if the executor chooses to use the special use valuation method for qualified real property, the aggregate decrease in the value of the property resulting from the choice cannot exceed \$1,040,000, up from \$1,020,000 for 2011.

The annual exclusion for gifts remains at \$13,000.

Other Items

- The monthly limit on the value of qualified transportation benefits exclusion for qualified parking provided by an employer to its employees for 2012 rises to \$240, up \$10 from the limit in 2011. However, the temporary increase in the monthly limit on the value of the qualified transportation benefits exclusion for transportation in a commuter highway vehicle and transit pass provided by an employer to its employees expires and reverts to \$125 for 2012.
- Several tax benefits are unchanged in 2012. For example, the additional standard deduction for blind people and senior citizens remains \$1,150 for married individuals and \$1,450 for singles and heads of household.

Happy Birthday! November

<i>Raymond Burts</i>	11-1
<i>Donald Thomas</i>	11-1
<i>Ben Poh</i>	11-3
<i>Warren Ladner</i>	11-3
<i>Gregory Gandy</i>	11-4
<i>Kenneth Taylor</i>	11-4
<i>Delores Sheets</i>	11-4
<i>Lori Gailey</i>	11-8
<i>Stephen Cannon</i>	11-8
<i>Maxine Taylor</i>	11-10
<i>Michael Nwaefulu</i>	11-10
<i>Chi Pham</i>	11-12
<i>Anthony Apodaca</i>	11-13
<i>Gary Fawcett</i>	11-13
<i>Michael Ellis</i>	11-17
<i>David Knudtson</i>	11-17
<i>Michael Ellis</i>	11-17
<i>Joseph Greco</i>	11-18
<i>Gloria Shelton</i>	11-19
<i>Angela Koch</i>	11-19
<i>Carla Ross</i>	11-20
<i>James Goldsmith Jr.</i>	11-20
<i>Charles Triplett</i>	11-21
<i>James Greco</i>	11-21
<i>Norman Vickers</i>	11-21
<i>Gayle Hayden</i>	11-22
<i>Larry Jaubert</i>	11-23
<i>Richard Brogan, Jr.</i>	11-23
<i>Alec Avulov</i>	11-23
<i>Daniel Rogers, Jr.</i>	11-23
<i>Angelika Loos-Sykes</i>	11-25
<i>Kimberly Krenz</i>	11-25
<i>Kyle Ngo</i>	11-27
<i>Janet Woods-Kelly</i>	11-28
<i>Brandon Swartz</i>	11-28
<i>Sandra Barrett</i>	11-30
<i>Anne Watson</i>	11-30

Washington Institute for Graduate Studies

Mission Statement

Designed for attorneys, certified public accountants, financial advisors working in the field of taxation, and Enrolled Agents before the IRS, our mission is to provide a quality distance learning experience that is relevant, convenient and affordable.

New Certificate Program Coming Soon!

Principles of Personal Excellence: Keys to Success in Any Life Arena

Washington Institute for Graduate Studies is pleased to announce a wonderful new certificate offering that is coming soon. It is our hope that it will greatly benefit all, in every aspect of their personal and professional lives.

What is it?

A collaborative partnership between *Washington Institute for Graduate Studies* and *The Applied Institute of Human Excellence* brings to students this comprehensive, certificate-based course. It is designed to facilitate success within any meaningful life arena by providing the essential principles, practices, current research and tools to maximize personal and professional effectiveness and satisfaction.

How is it organized?

The course will guide students sequentially through the various factors that influence the performance of the mind, spirit, and body. Twenty-six separate coaching sessions will be delivered by content experts covering a wide array of topics including:

- Motives, Values, & Purpose
- The Impact of Nutrition & Fitness on Performance
- Goals & Measuring Your Performance
- Intellectual Resilience
- Focus, Concentration & Absorption
- Relaxation Techniques
- Beliefs, Self-Confidence, & Self-Concept
- And many others!*

Each session will last an average of 75 minutes and will include streaming video and audio discussion and coaching, and exercises, assignments, illustrations, examinations, and readings.

What is the desired outcome?

Each student will build a personal performance portfolio consisting of documents that articulate their individual core values, long and short-term goals, and practical plans. These elements will culminate in a practical plan that offers students control over their personal and professional satisfaction by managing or eliminating much of the volatility experienced in life.

Presenting Experts:

Dr. Bruce H. Jackson – As a writer, speaker, author, consultant, coach, and leadership adventure facilitator, Dr. Jackson's core interests are to help individuals seek their highest capacities while fulfilling meaningful life missions.

Dr. R. Christopher Barden – As a licensed attorney, licensed psychologist, research scientist, speaker, writer, and national science-litigation-legislation consultant, Dr. Barden has published in the leading journals and texts in child psychology, social psychology, clinical psychology, psychiatry, surgery, pediatrics, and law. Dr. Barden has helped draft and enact successful national health care reform legislation including the Emergency Medical System for Children Act which was published in the *Harvard Journal on Legislation* (adopted in more than 20 states).

Anne Perkins – Specializing in weight loss resistance and food obsession, Ann is a Certified Personal Trainer, and also holds a BS in Psychology from Brigham Young University. Anne's unique approach begins with a sound understanding of their dreams, not just goals, in an effort to keep them engaged and inspired to make life-enhancing change.

Over Taxed...

When the Only Thing Left to Do is Laugh

The U.S. Senate is considering a bill that would tax Botox. When Botox users heard this, they were horrified. Well, I think they were horrified. It's difficult to tell.

–Craig Ferguson

Next to being shot at and missed, nothing is quite as satisfying as an income tax refund.

– F.J. Raymond

*...and in honor of the upcoming
Thanksgiving Holiday:*

Q: Why did pilgrims' pants always fall down?
A: Because they wore their belt buckle on their hat!

When asked to write a composition entitled, "What I'm thankful for on Thanksgiving," little Timothy wrote: "I am thankful that I'm not a turkey."

The woman had been frantically walking through the entire grocery store examining all the frozen turkeys but could not find one large enough for her entire family. She finally asked the stock boy, "Do these turkeys get any bigger?"

To which the stock boy replied, "No ma'am, they're dead."

