

# In brief

## IRS offers Saver's Credit info

### Report predicts loss for state

As state revenue growth slows, the consequences of the federal economic stimulus package will be more and more deeply felt. That is the conclusion of a report, The Fed's Economic Stimulus Package and the New Mexico Impact, released Monday by the nonprofit child advocacy group New Mexico Voices for Children.

In the face of already grim state revenue predictions, New Mexico will lose about \$27 million due to the stimulus package's tax breaks for business. As revenues fall, states must either cut spending or raise taxes, the report said.

Direct aid to states is not the only effective form of economic stimulus that the package left out. Extending unemployment insurance payments and increasing food stamp benefits would have a greater impact because it would improve the purchasing power of the lowest-income Americans. Low-income Americans are more likely than middle- and upper-income earners to spend all their new income, and increased spending is the point of the stimulus package.

Taxpayers who make eligible contributions to an employer-sponsored retirement plan or to an individual retirement arrangement may be able to take a tax credit, according to the IRS.

The Savers Credit — formally known as the Retirement Savings Contributions Credit — applies to individuals with one of the following filing and income status:

◆ Single with income up to \$26,000.

◆ Head of household with income up to \$39,000.

◆ Married filing jointly with incomes up to \$52,000.

To be eligible for the credit, a taxpayer must be at least age 18, not a full-time student and cannot be claimed as a dependent on another person's return.

For more information, review IRS Publication 590, Individual Retirement Arrangements and Form 8880, Credit for Qualified Retirement Savings Contributions. The publication and form can be downloaded at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or ordered by calling 800-TAX-FORM or 800-829-3676.

### Blackstone posts \$170 million loss

NEW YORK — Private equity firm Blackstone Group LP said Monday that it swung to a loss during the fourth quarter because of a write-down on its investment in bond insurer Financial Guaranty Insurance Co. and deterioration in the credit markets.

Shares in Blackstone, which went public last June, hit an all-time low on the news. The company did little to bolster the market's confidence, warning on a conference call that things may get worse.

Blackstone lost \$170 million during the fourth quarter, compared with earnings of \$1.18 billion during the final quarter in 2006.

Adjusted net income, fell to \$88 million, or 8 cents per share, from \$808.1 million, or 72 cents per share, during the year-ago period.

### Vail Resorts' income dips

DENVER — Vail Resorts Inc., the nation's largest ski resort operator, said Monday that its net income dipped 3 percent in the fiscal second quarter as a dearth of early season snowfall kept skiers away.

For the quarter that ended Jan. 31, the company reported net income of \$51.3 million, or \$1.31 a share, compared with net income of \$53 million, or \$1.35 a share, a year earlier.

Revenue fell 0.3 percent to \$360 million from \$361 million. Lodging and mountain operations drew \$314.5 million in revenue, up 3.2 percent, which was offset by a 19 percent drop in revenue in the real estate segment to \$45.5 million.

#### Staff and wire reports