

## Community Planning and Economic Development Media Advisory

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### **1,700 City of Minneapolis STEP-UP Interns Started Their First Day of Summer Internships Today at over 230 Local Companies and Nonprofits**

**Monday, June 20, 2016 (Minneapolis, MN)** – The City of Minneapolis youth employment program, STEP-UP, kicked off its 13th summer today with 1,700 Minneapolis youth and young adults ages 14-21 starting their paid summer internships at over 230 participating government agencies, nonprofits, and corporations throughout the Twin Cities metro area.

“Today the City of Minneapolis gained a whole lot of genius,” said Mayor Betsy Hodges. “Each and every one of our new interns has unique talents they bring to the table; we are so excited to have them join our team. In turn I hope they gain valuable skills and insight that will set them up for success in their professional careers.”

Created in 2004, STEP-UP has provided nearly 21,000 internship opportunities for Minneapolis youth and young adults who face some of the greatest barriers to employment, including youth from families of lower economic backgrounds, youth of color, and youth with disabilities. STEP-UP interns explore diverse career interests, gain valuable on-the-job skills, make strong professional connections, and prepare for meaningful careers. Before being placed into their internships, most STEP-UP participants receive between 7-14 hours of work-readiness training and complete a mock-interview that prepares them for their real-life summer internship interview.

STEP-UP offers three program experiences based on age, experience and job training needs. Youth with limited English speaking skills, special needs or limited work experience can build their skills and experience through STEP-UP Explore or STEP-UP Discover internships. Older and more experienced interns can begin to build their professional resumes and connections by working in business, government or nonprofit jobs as STEP-UP Achieve interns. STEP-UP Achieve is directed by [AchieveMpls](#) in partnership with the City of Minneapolis.

Participants' workdays and experiences vary site to site; on average youth work from 20-32 hours per week for eight weeks. A job site supervisor and often times a mentor guide the youth through the internship over the summer. Many times these relationships continue for months or years beyond the internship, providing longer-term support for interns in their future career and education decisions.

"We're so pleased to welcome another STEP-UP intern to the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis this summer," said Amy Kramer Brenengen, Project Director for the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion. "Our interns give us an inspiring preview of our future workforce here at the Fed and in the Twin Cities: bright, motivated leaders who have a rich variety of skills, talents and life experiences to share with us. As we prepare for our summer intern, we're thinking about how the work of our past STEP UP interns has helped us throughout the year. We learn as much from them as they do from us."

STEP-UP interns gain more than job skills. Some of the other training interns receive is focused on problem solving, professionalism, interview skills, communication, and resume writing. Advanced level internships and industry-specific trainings help interns deepen and integrate career exposure with post-secondary education and career planning.

"My STEP-UP Achieve internship gave me the opportunity to learn more about healthcare," said Mary, a returning STEP-UP Achieve intern. "It was an awesome experience because I was able to see whether working with patients or working in administration would work better for me. I found out that I like aspects of both!"

At the close of the program, a graduation celebration will be held on August 18 for all the interns, supervisors and other program supporters at the Guthrie Theater. To learn more about STEP-UP visit [here](#). If you are interested in interviewing an intern or touring a job site to meet a supervisor and intern, please contact [Rose Lindsay](#) at 612.673.5015.

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