

Community Planning and Economic Development

News Release

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City of Minneapolis STEP-UP Youth Employment Program Now Accepting Applications for 2017 Summer Internship Placements

Tuesday, December 6, 2016 (Minneapolis, MN) – The City of Minneapolis youth employment program STEP-UP began accepting applications for 2017 summer internship placements today. Eligible Minneapolis youth ages 14-21 who are interested in participating in the 2017 STEP-UP class have until February 10, 2017, to complete an application [online](#).

“STEP-UP not only prepares our city's young people to be future leaders, it also drives companies, nonprofits and public agencies to become inclusive workplaces,” said Mayor Betsy Hodges. “As Minneapolis continues to grow, we need to do everything we can to make sure we have a diverse workforce that is ready and prepared to join and lead our city’s thriving economy.”

STEP-UP is one of the country’s premiere youth employment programs, serving Minneapolis youth who face some of the greatest barriers to employment, including youth from disadvantaged economic backgrounds, youth of color, youth from recent immigrant families, and youth with disabilities. Since the program was launched, it has provided over 24,000 internship opportunities. In addition to summer jobs with more than 230 top Twin Cities companies, nonprofits and public agencies, STEP-UP also offers work readiness training, advanced-level internships and industry-specific career opportunities that help interns integrate their career exposure with post-secondary education and career planning.

“My STEP-UP job was my first job in my entire life. I gained a lot of skills and experience,” said Abdirkhader, STEP-UP Achieve alumnus. “I worked at Children's Minnesota with a lot of great, professional people who helped me think about my future. They told me how they achieved their careers and encouraged me to continue my education so I, too, could be a manager one day if I wanted!”

“There is more hope for me in the future now that I have the experience I gained from STEP-UP,” said Olivia, STEP-UP Achieve alumnus. “My job helped me to learn more about how money and banking works. I now know what career I would like to pursue and my goals are clearer than before.”

Prior to being placed in their internships, youth receive work readiness training certified by the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce that prepares them for a professional work environment. Returning interns receive advanced training that helps them deepen their professional skills. Throughout their internship, they gain valuable on-the-job skills, make strong professional connections, and become exposed to careers they may have not otherwise accessed without STEP-UP.

“I really enjoyed watching our intern grow as an employee. She participated in staff activities and projects and fit right in,” said Krystle Wallace, Operations Manager for the Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota. “It was great to watch her learn new things and get a better understanding of the daily job tasks.”

In 2016, STEP-UP placed more than 1,600 Minneapolis youth in jobs with over 220 businesses, public agencies, and nonprofits. Youth represented in the 2016 class were 88% youth of color, 48% youth from recent immigrant families, and 15% youth with disabilities or other significant barriers to employment. 36% spoke fluently in a language in addition to English, representing 44 different languages from around the world.

Businesses, public agencies and nonprofits interested in employing interns in 2016 can find information on the City of Minneapolis STEP-UP [website](#).

STEP-UP is a City of Minneapolis program in partnership with AchieveMpls, Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Project for Pride in Living.

To learn more about STEP-UP, or to access the online STEP-UP application, visit the City of Minneapolis [website](#). You can also follow STEP-UP on Twitter @STEPUPMpls or like them on Facebook.

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