

## 1,850 youth employed in summer STEP-UP program

Written by

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Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak celebrated the wrap-up of the City's STEP-UP summer jobs program last week with interns and their employers, including many of the city's top corporations and nonprofits. The Mayor thanked the 230 businesses and organizations that employed 1,850 youth this summer and presented special awards to STEP-UP employers Wells Fargo and Project for Pride in Living.

Wells Fargo and Project for Pride and Living were honored for their outstanding commitment to Minneapolis youth at the event.

"Today we recognize the bright, talented youth that earned not only a paycheck this summer through STEP-UP but also work experience that will help guide them as they make career decisions ahead," said Mayor Rybak. "We also recognize the commitment from the business community to mentor these kids, with special tribute to Wells Fargo for more than doubling the number of interns employed this summer, and to Project for Pride in Living for their work to prepare kids, so they are trained before they ever step in the door."

"The interns are bright, eager to learn and really grow through the opportunity to participate in this program," said Executive vice president for Wells Fargo Home Mortgage John Rasmussen. "The STEP-UP internship program clearly supports and cultivates their dreams of having a successful future."

Awards were also given to six select interns and three company supervisors who were nominated for their outstanding performances and contributions during the 2012 STEP-UP program. The interns and supervisors represented STEP-UP employers Boston Scientific, Minneapolis Public Housing Authority, Universal Hospital Services, North High School Community Education, WomenVenture, Minnesota Twins, Kaleidoscope Place, and Mortenson Construction.

Speakers included Mayor Rybak; STEP-UP Chair Richard Davis, U.S. Bancorp Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer; and Andrew Furco, Associate Vice President for the

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Office of Public Engagement at the University of Minnesota. Three STEP-UP interns also shared stories from their summer internships, including Jordan McKinney, and Claire Weers, who were employed by MIGIZI Communications; and Brianna Gay, who was employed at William Mitchell College of Law.

Through a public-private partnership with local businesses and organizations, the STEP-UP program significantly benefits low-income youth and youth of color by helping them gain valuable work-readiness skills and long-term professional skills, and connecting them with business and community leaders. The STEP-UP program—which is managed in collaboration with AchieveMpls—has created valuable workplace experiences for nearly 18,000 Minneapolis youth, ages 14-21, since 2002 and was recognized as an outstanding model for youth employment and public-private partnerships at a White House conference in 2012.