

## Community Planning and Economic Development News Release

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### City of Minneapolis STEP-UP Youth Employment Program Announces 2017 Employer, Intern and Supervisor of the Year Awards at Year-end Celebration

**Thursday, Aug. 17, 2017 (Minneapolis, MN)** – Earlier this afternoon, the STEP-UP youth employment program announced the recipients of the 2017 STEP-UP Employers of the Year, STEP-UP Interns of the Year and STEP-UP Supervisors of the Year awards. The award winners were announced during a celebration of STEP-UP’s 14th annual cohort of interns, a group of nearly 1,700 youth ages 14 to 21 who worked at over 200 top Twin Cities nonprofits, government agencies, small businesses and corporations this summer. Over 800 STEP-UP employers, interns and community supporters attended the event, which was held at the Guthrie Theatre.

The awards were presented by STEP-UP Co-Chairs R.T. Rybak, CEO and president of The Minneapolis Foundation, and Richard Davis, chairman of U.S. Bank, and David Frank, interim director of the City of Minneapolis department of Community Planning and Economic Development.

#### **2017 Award Winners include:**

##### STEP-UP Employer of the Year

- Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
- Accenture

##### STEP-UP Discover Intern of the Year

- Ramahn Bell, Minneapolis Urban League
- Jalyn Hall, North Community YMCA

##### STEP-UP Achieve Intern of the Year

- Damari Jordan-Onchiri, Department of Human Services
- Joshua Mendez, Northside News

#### STEP-UP Discover Supervisor of the Year

- Kowanna Powell Anderson, Minneapolis Community Education
- Sadiya Kahn, Children's Dental Services

#### STEP-UP Achieve Supervisor of the Year

- Deka Kari, Hennepin County
- Amanda Packer, Xcel Energy

"The Minneapolis park system greatly benefits from the energy and hard work provided by STEP-UP employees every day," said Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Superintendent Jayne Miller. "They help keep our playgrounds clean and safe, improve our city's water quality, provide leadership at summer camps and recreation centers and contribute to urban agriculture initiatives. These are important opportunities for young people to learn job skills and explore future careers, and we're proud to play a role in cultivating the future leaders of our city."

"Our STEP-UP interns are a window to the future workforce here at Accenture and in the Twin Cities," said David Wilson, senior managing director at Accenture. "It's exciting to see their enthusiasm, range of talents and the life experiences they bring to our workplace."

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) Park Pathways Program Freedom School and Asian Media Access dance group performed at the event. Each group featured STEP-UP interns. STEP-UP alumna Ashley Yang and interns Destiny Rollie and Badrudin Aden each shared reflections how the program has impacted their lives.

STEP-UP is the City of Minneapolis internship program for young adults ages 14-21. Each year, STEP-UP recruits, trains and places more than 1,600 Minneapolis youth in meaningful paid internships with over 200 top Twin Cities businesses, public agencies and nonprofits, building a stronger future workforce for our knowledge-based regional economy. As one of the country's premier youth employment programs, STEP-UP serves youth who face some of the greatest barriers to employment, particularly youth from low-income families, youth of color, youth from immigrant families and youth with disabilities. The City of Minneapolis STEP-UP is a program in partnership with AchieveMpls, Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and Project for Pride in Living.

Created in 2004, STEP-UP has provided more than 24,000 internship opportunities. In 2017, 85 percent of the youth are of color and 48 percent of the youth are from immigrant families. Learn more about STEP-UP at the [City of Minneapolis website](#). Follow STEP-UP on social media with hashtag #STEPUPMPLS.