

**BEN TAYLOR**  
SVP, Communications/Community Affairs  
Star Tribune  
Step Up Program Celebration Remarks  
August 17, 2004

This is a bittersweet day. It's the end of this year's Step Up program. But it's the beginning of great things to come for all of you. Here's the bottom line: You have succeeded this summer. And clearly you have gotten a roadmap for what it will take to succeed in the future.

When the summer started, you didn't know what to expect as interns, and frankly neither did we as employers. The best thing about this program is that we all have learned and can all go away better than when we started. We hope we gave you some skills and ideas you can use. And we know you gave us a fresh perspective we did not have before you came.

As a way of saying goodbye, today on our company web site, we posted interviews with all of our Step Up interns, asking a few basic questions. One was: what have you learned?

Let me read you a couple of the answers:

- “Working this summer made me see that life is what you make of it, and you can do whatever you set your mind to.”
  
- “I’ve learned that if I want to survive in this world, I have to stretch far beyond what my hands can reach.”
  
- “To work means to work, not to sit idle when work is done, and there’s still time left. There is always something to do. I just have to hunt for it.”
  
- And my favorite: “I learned that I don’t really like working in an office that much.”

There is a lot you can only learn by experience. And some of you have told us that your experiences sometimes surprised you.

Many of you said you learned that work is more structured than school. You learned that deadlines are real. You learned that

sometimes feedback can sting a little bit. You learned that you are going to get feedback whether you like it or not. And some of you learned that sometimes the workplace can be downright boring.

We're sure that we gave you a taste of what the workplace is really like. Because we didn't pamper you. For this short time, you were one of us, and you made us and our companies better.

Whatever you have learned and however you apply it, we want you to go away knowing that we got far more out of this relationship than we gave. You have truly taught us as well.

It's pretty common for us old geezers to talk about how easy kids have it these days. But as we have worked with you this summer and learned about your lives, we see the challenges you have-- that we never had.

We absolutely admire your determination, your commitment, your desire and your spirit. You are full of heart.

You have it a lot tougher than we ever did. And you are determined to succeed.

The idea of Step Up is that you would learn about real life in the workplace. We had no idea that we would learn about real life too.

The day-to-day challenges you face as teenagers in the city may be far greater than anything you will face in the workplace. Still you clearly have what it takes to push through.

So now that this first Step Up program is over, at the Star Tribune we are declaring this exceptional program a major success. In fact, we have already hired one of our interns for a full time job. And we are prepared to welcome a new contingent of interns next summer. We want to thank the mayor's office and Achieve!Minneapolis for bringing this great idea to fruition.

But most of all, we want thank you, the Step Up interns, for giving us the opportunity to be part of your future. We wish you the very best and thank you-- from the bottom of our hearts-- for all that you gave us this summer. Thank you.