



## Community Planning and Economic Development Department

# News Release

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*Minneapolis City Goals: A Safe Place to Call Home ▫ Jobs & Economic Vitality ▫ Eco-Focused ▫ Livable Communities, Healthy Lives ▫ Many People, One Minneapolis ▫ A City That Works*

## 1,850 Minneapolis youth employed this summer through the City's STEP-UP summer jobs program

### Mayor visits interns at fast-growing tech company, Agosto

June 25, 2012 (MINNEAPOLIS) — Mayor R.T. Rybak visited six STEP-UP interns today who are gaining in-depth IT skills and experience at Agosto, an international high-tech firm based in Minneapolis. One of the world's oldest and fastest-growing Google Apps and Cloud consulting firms, Agosto is one of 220 Twin Cities employers that are hiring and training 1,850 Minneapolis youth this summer, through the City of Minneapolis STEP-UP program. Through STEP-UP, the City of Minneapolis, in partnership with AchieveMpls, recruits, trains and places talented low-income young people ages 14-21 in meaningful summer jobs at top local companies, government agencies and nonprofits. Today marks the beginning of the interns' second week on the job.

"STEP-UP has matured to the point that our employers offer young people not only meaningful work experience, but in-depth skills building and career laddering that they can expand through the summer and build on later in school and in future internships," said **Mayor R.T. Rybak**. "This is how we build the economy of the future: by giving the young people that are our future the tools and training they need to help our fastest-growing sectors grow even faster."

At Agosto, STEP-UP interns are gaining unique on-the-job experience in the IT sector and adding technical, project and change management skills to their portfolio. The interns are working with local nonprofit organizations this summer to implement and provide support in Cloud technology and pro bono Google Apps. This hands-on work is designed to give interns greater skills and confidence, which will lead to greater opportunities for placement and success in future employment.

"When I was starting my own career, I personally benefitted from internship opportunities and was also mentored by executives who were well established in their careers," said **Aric Bandy**, CEO of Agosto. "Today, it's much more difficult for graduating students to gain the experience they need to break into the IT sector especially considering the economic and diversity barriers some of these students face."

"My STEP-UP internship is helping me to experience more aspects of the IT field as I head off to college and prepare for my future career, said **Erica**, a graduate of Cristo Rey Jesuit High School this spring. "I also hope to help my community and give back by sharing what I've learned through Agosto."

“At the same time, there is truly not enough local IT talent with the skill set that Agosto needs. We strongly support efforts to grow a more skilled workforce here in the Twin Cities and are excited to help these STEP-UP interns gain the experience and confidence necessary to continue their technology studies and eventually launch careers in technology,” **Bandy** said.

Several of the Agosto interns participated in the first-ever Google for Youth Entrepreneurs Day training held in Minneapolis in May. The training provided basic skills in Google tools so that interns could begin their STEP-UP internships with a better understanding of how technology and the Internet can be of help to them, as well as spark these young people with an entrepreneurial drive that will serve them well in these opportunities.

Since its creation in 2004, STEP-UP has created valuable workplace experiences for nearly 16,000 Minneapolis youth, helping them to explore career interests, gain invaluable work skills and make strong professional connections for the future. Of the youth placed through 2011, 86% have been youth of color, 93% have come from families living in poverty and 50% have come from immigrant families. STEP-UP was recognized as an outstanding model for youth employment and public-private partnerships at a White House conference in early January.

### **About Agosto**

Founded in 2001 in Minneapolis, and with offices in Minneapolis and Toronto, Agosto ([www.agosto.com](http://www.agosto.com)) is one of the oldest and fastest-growing Google Apps and cloud consulting firms. One of the earliest Google Apps partners, Agosto has been singled out by MSPmentor 100, a distinguished research report that identifies the world’s most progressive managed service providers. The company served on Google’s Customer Advisory Board in 2008 and joined its Enterprise Advisory Board in 2009, one of only eight partners to sit on the board. Agosto was also ranked in Inc. magazine’s 5,000 Fastest Growing Companies in 2009 and 2010, and was featured along with Microsoft, Oracle and Rackspace on Talkin’ Cloud’s 2012 Top 200 Cloud Experts. Agosto’s clients include Regis Corporation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Wind Exercise, Famous Dave’s, Goodwill Easter Seals, Minnesota Wild and Jaguar Land Rover.

### **About AchieveMpls**

As the nonprofit partner of the Minneapolis Public Schools, AchieveMpls mobilizes our community’s generous resources to ensure that all Minneapolis youth have the tools and support they need to be career and college ready. AchieveMpls directs Career & College Centers in 14 Minneapolis public high schools, manages the STEP-UP Achieve summer jobs program in partnership with the City of Minneapolis, and creates opportunities for individuals and organizations to transform the lives of young people as volunteers and community partners. Preparing Minneapolis youth to succeed in school, work and life is the best investment we can make in our city’s health and vitality. For more information, visit [www.achievempls.org](http://www.achievempls.org).

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