

Community Planning and Economic Development News Release

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Sixteen Minneapolis-Saint Paul High School Students Head to Silicon Valley to Learn about Technology Careers

Students to tour Bay Area as Silicon North Stars from July 26-August 1

Friday, July 24, 2015 (Minneapolis, MN) – On Sunday, July 26, sixteen Minneapolis-St. Paul area eighth graders, including eight City of Minneapolis STEP-UP interns (six of which are from Minneapolis Public Schools) and eight St. Paul Public School students from Washington Technology Magnet School and Humboldt IT Academy, will head to California’s Silicon Valley to explore technology careers through Silicon North Stars, a nonprofit program founded by Steve and Mary Grove, two Google executives.

“For Minneapolis to remain competitive in the 21st century global economy, we need to have a skilled workforce to keep moving us forward,” said Minneapolis Mayor Betsy Hodges. “I am very excited that a group of our STEP-UP interns will experience firsthand what it’s like to have a career in the tech industry by visiting Silicon Valley. I hope that their experience sparks a desire to be a part of this critical field and inspires them to use their talent to fuel Minneapolis’ burgeoning tech industry.”

Silicon North Stars is a one-week program or technology camp focused on giving a select group of high-potential eighth graders from underserved communities in Minnesota the opportunity to spend a week in California’s Silicon Valley, learning about technology and the internet directly from some of the top companies and startups in the world. The students come from a variety of diverse backgrounds, but share a passion for technology and the web -- and a desire to one day pursue a career in those fields.

“We started Silicon North Stars because we wanted to give Minnesota students an opportunity to learn about careers in technology,” said Steve Grove, a Northfield, Minnesota native. “By experiencing first-hand what it’s like to work in some of the top tech companies and startups in the world, we hope this experience will inspire them to pursue careers in technology themselves one day.”

This year's North Stars include:

Akia Yang, Washington Technology Magnet School
Anaa Jibicho, Washington Technology Magnet School
Atheena Yang, Washington Technology Magnet School
Camryn Franke, Washington Technology Magnet School
Elijah Abdullah, Theodore Roosevelt High School
Somya Arcenia, Brooklyn Center High School
Sam Chihak, Susan B. Anthony High School
Micaela "Mickey" Edwards, Sanford Middle School
Gustav DeMars, Anthony Middle School
Raven Hayes, Sullivan Middle School
Aryana Miles, Field Community School
Cher Xiong, Noble Academy
Fatima Cole, Humboldt High School
Yusanat Tway, Murray Junior High School
Ta-Shawan McMiller, Humboldt High School
Feysa Worka, Humboldt High School

Bios of all the students are available on request.

During their stay in California, the students will participate in team building activities, meet entrepreneurs and visit companies known for innovation like Google, Facebook, Lyft, YouTube, Indiegogo, and a collection of early-stage startups at Galvanize SF. They'll also visit Stanford University and the venture capital fund Andreessen Horowitz.

On Thursday, July 30, 2015 as a culmination to the intensive, week long immersion technology camp, the students will be asked to create their own startups ideas, which they'll pitch to an audience of Silicon Valley tech leaders at a Demo Day from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at Galvanize in San Francisco.

"These students show amazing potential to be future leaders in technology in Minnesota," said Mary Grove. "The demo day is a great opportunity for them to take a risk and put their own ideas out there – and get feedback from the tech community."

Follow the Silicon North Stars on their journey [@siliconstars](https://twitter.com/siliconstars) on Twitter or www.facebook.com/siliconnorthstars or by searching #siliconstars. To set up an interview to talk with one of the Silicon North Stars before or after their trip and/or a conference call with Steve and Mary Grove call Rose Lindsay with the City of Minneapolis at 612.673.5015.

The Silicon North Stars program is made possible in partnership with the City of Minneapolis STEP-UP program, The Academy of Information Technology at Humboldt High School, CoCo and

the Washington Technology Magnet School. Its board members include former Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak, and CoCo co-founder and CEO Kyle Coolbroth.

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