

# 2024 Step-Up Omaha Applications Now Open

OMAHA, NEBRASKA, USA, February 20, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Step-Up Omaha](#), a program dedicated to providing career exploration, job opportunities, internships, and entrepreneurship avenues for youth and young adults aged 14-21, is pleased to announce that applications for the 2023 summer employment opportunity are now available. The application deadline is March 1.

Step-Up Omaha aims to connect youth and young adults with opportunities for career exploration, internships, entrepreneurship, and leadership development. Since its inception in 2008, Step-Up partners have introduced more than 8,000 young individuals to job training and career pathways. Wages for participants range from \$10 to \$14 or more per hour, depending on the worksite. Some employers offer interns the potential to earn as much as \$3,000 or more during the summer.

**“**

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*Willie Barney, CEO of the Empowerment Network*



Empowerment Network staff, Mayor Jean Stothert, foundation and nonprofit partners gather to mark 17 years of Step-Up Omaha. (Photo credit: Neo Barney)

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The [Empowerment Network](#) and its partners have collaborated successfully to present Step-Up Omaha for 17 years, underscoring the commitment to comprehensive youth development. This year's program is scheduled to run from Monday, June 3 to Friday, Aug. 9.

“The most impactful aspect of the program at that time for me was the different presenters every day,” said Lamar Henderson, a Sr. Consultant at Union Pacific who went through one of the first cohorts of the program. “Each of

the different perspectives about ‘adult life’ and some of the things I would have to look forward to facing at that time made me look at my life differently. I started to plan more for the future. I started to stay later just for a chance to speak with the presenters and ask questions. The information I gained prepared me for the life I went on to lead.” Henderson has since gone on to

earn a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Creighton University, as well as an MBA from Midland University. He is also an entrepreneur who owns real property and a book of business for Renegade Bootcamp & Boxing, located at 19277 Conifer Lane in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

"Step-Up Omaha represents a vital opportunity for our youth and young adults to gain valuable skills and experiences that will shape their future careers," said Willie Barney, CEO of the Empowerment Network. "We are proud to continue this tradition of empowerment and collaboration."

Major funders for Step-Up Omaha include the City of Omaha, and Charles E. Lakin Foundation, as well as, United Way of the Midlands, Office of Violence Prevention, American National Bank, CHI Health, Mutual of Omaha, Google, Cox Communications, and other major employers and organizational partners.

During a press conference held Feb. 15, Jennifer Green, who runs operations and grants at the Charles E. Lakin Foundation, said "The Foundation understands the importance of the Step-Up Program and its overall goals to develop and retain a diverse, dynamic, and gifted workforce of youth and young adults in Omaha. The training and employment pathways that these individuals are provided is in many ways, life changing. In many cases, helping redirect their life trajectory into a positive future allowing for endless possibilities and opportunities."

Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert expressed her support for the program as well, saying "This is a very successful partnership with city government, business, philanthropic donors and non-profit organizations. I want to provide the opportunity to prepare even more young people for employment and careers, and that's why the city of Omaha continues to fund Step-Up."

Stothert added, "When we invest in our young people early, we have an opportunity to introduce them to a wide range of careers. Then, through education, advanced training, and job placement services, Omaha can offer the types of jobs that will keep young talent here in Omaha."

In addition to the City of Omaha and the Lakin Foundation, Step-Up Omaha is also supported by the Obama Foundation's My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Alliance. The My Brother's Keeper Alliance, seeks to positively shift outcomes for boys and young men of color here in Omaha through the implementation of evidence-based practices, which address six MBK milestones, cradle to career, during a young person's life.

The Empowerment Network leads the work of the My Brother's Keeper Alliance in Omaha (MBK Omaha) as part of a national, cross-sector call-to-action focused on building safe and supportive communities for boys and young men of color.

Interested individuals can apply on the Step-Up Omaha site. Employers wishing to become a worksite for Step-Up Omaha can do so by visiting <https://stepupomaha.com/employers/>.

## About Step-Up Omaha

Step-Up Omaha is a program dedicated to providing career exploration, job opportunities, internships, and entrepreneurship avenues for youth and young adults aged 14-21 in Omaha, Nebraska. Since its inception in 2008, Step-Up Omaha has connected thousands of young individuals with valuable job training and career pathways.

## About the Empowerment Network

The Empowerment Network is a nonprofit organization committed to advancing economic, social and civic progress within Omaha's African American community, North Omaha and the region. Through collaborative efforts and innovative initiatives, the Empowerment Network strives to create opportunities for empowerment and transformation in every zip code and neighborhood in the City of Omaha and other national communities.

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