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BY STAFF EDITOR ON AUGUST 24, 2016

EDUCATION



Hamilton County public high school students worked at 40 Chattanooga area businesses, nonprofits and organizations this summer thanks to Public Education Foundation's new STEP-UP Chattanooga program.

In collaboration with partners and funders, Public Education Foundation (PEF) and Hamilton County Department of Education launched STEP-UP Chattanooga in January, a robust internship program for high school juniors and seniors in Hamilton County public schools designed to address the challenges faced by both businesses and students in a complex, changing global economy. STEP-UP serves underrepresented students from low-income backgrounds, those most at risk for joblessness and lack of higher education.

STEP-UP Chattanooga recruited local high school students and provided work readiness training designed to help them be successful in interviews and professional settings. One hundred students were hired by area businesses, nonprofit agencies, and public institutions where they completed meaningful assignments this summer. Throughout the experience, students received support and feedback from STEP-UP staff and supervisors at their place of employment.

Organizations that hosted STEP-UP interns built relationships with a pool of talented, diverse future employees while filling job vacancies and demonstrating a commitment to improving the lives of at-risk youth. Students had opportunities to explore careers while developing work skills, as well as to network with adult professionals who will help them achieve educational and professional goals.

The following organizations hired STEP-UP Chattanooga paid interns this summer: 2nds in Building Materials, Inc./Corporate office of Southeastern Salvage, Application Researchers, ASA Engineering & Consulting, Inc.,

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STEP-UP Chattanooga is modeled after the nationally-recognized STEP-UP Achieve Minneapolis program, which has served over 20,000 students since 2004. BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Health Foundation, Inc. committed \$300,000 and Benwood Foundation contributed \$200,000 for the first two years of the program.

For more information, visit stepupchattanooga.org.



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