

Community Planning and Economic Development News Release

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City of Minneapolis TechHire Program Celebrates Two Year Anniversary with 439 Program Graduates and 369 Engaged Employers

Thursday, March 9, 2017 (MINNEAPOLIS) – This month marks the two-year anniversary of the City of Minneapolis Employment and Training Program, *Minneapolis Saint Paul TechHire* (MSP TechHire) launch and being named one of the first national TechHire cities by President Obama. With the goal to close the workforce skills gap in the high tech economy by building a path for diverse workers to access training, support and tech jobs across the Greater Minneapolis Region, *MSP TechHire* has graduated 439 students and engaged 369 employers since its launch in 2015.

“When I partnered with the White House two years ago to become a TechHire city, we knew that the best way to keep our economy moving forward is by giving everyone the ability to maximize their genius and by keeping our workforce competitive,” said Mayor Betsy Hodges. “TechHire is Minneapolis’ gift to our regional economy and I am proud of the investments we have made and the partnerships we have built to give individuals – particularly women and people of color – the training needed to fill the many vacancies that require tech training across multiple industries.”

With over 6,977 open technology positions currently in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul-Bloomington labor market landscape, the need for *MSP TechHire* is greater than ever. *MSP TechHire* prepares its students through accelerated training boot camps or online training to become service/help desk, desktop support and/or software developers depending on which training students access. In addition to in-demand technical skills, training includes soft skills like workplace communications, and connections to employers with job openings and an interest at looking at a non-traditional candidates. Hired graduates receive ongoing support as they acclimate to their work environment to ensure long-term success and continued growth.

Cedar Riverside resident Ahmed Mohamed found out about a special City of Minneapolis sponsored class, *IT-Ready*, provided by *MSP TechHire* partner *Creating IT Futures* last year and enrolled with encouragement from his mother. Within eight weeks, Ahmed was provided with

nearly 300 hours of training to master the technical skills needed to obtain the professional CompTIA A+ certification. He also learned the soft skills necessary for interviews and to thrive in the workplace. Prior to training, Ahmed had been working at a travel agency as an on-call reservation specialist. Today he is a successful member of Fairview Health Services' Endpoint Project Execution Team.

"I feel like I have another family outside of my family when I am here," Ahmed Mohamed said of his work at Fairview. "I know Fairview is in my best interest." Thanks to mentors like Lori Offerman, a Fairview IT Consultant who participated in hiring Mohamed, he is excited to advance his career. Supported by the resources IT Ready helped to align, Mohamed personifies his mantra "you get out of it what you put in." Mohamed's next goal is to become a project manager.

Fairview Health Services is committed to hiring more graduates like Ahmed and already have. Since 2015, Fairview has hired seven *MSP TechHire* graduates.

"MSP TechHire is an important and strategic initiative that has helped train local residents and fill critical job openings in the Cedar Riverside Community," said Laura Beeth, Fairview Health Services System Director Talent Acquisition, Human Resources. "This is important to us as an anchor organization in the neighborhood, we are committed to invest and hire locally."

Of the 439 *MSP TechHire* program graduates, 186 graduated from software development boot camps and are Minneapolis residents. Their net taxable income increased by \$2.6M which represents more than 150% improvement in wages for the average placed software program graduate from Minneapolis.

"The students from Prime Digital Academy are immersed in real-world software development experience. These are the type of students you should be looking at having within your organization," said Justin Grammens, Founder, Recursive Awesome. "Employees who are agile, think differently and bring a diverse background of experiences to their job."

The economy does not show any slowdown in the demand for workers in tech jobs. The State predicts there will be more than 200,000 tech jobs available in Minnesota in the next decade (not including health care tech jobs). *MSP TechHire* partners are continuing to produce innovative programs and solutions to help meet this demand. *PRIME Digital Academy* recently launched a new program aimed at producing in-demand user experience design talent from the local community. *Creating It Futures* piloted a soft skills course called PrepareU, targeted for IT workers and is looking at additional courses to meet employer needs such as project management and cyber security. *The Software Guild* now is offering a 10-14 month part-time

online program to increase student access to education and employers. The online course teaches the same soft skills and tech skills as the on-the-ground trainings.

To learn more about *MSP TechHire*'s ten partner organizations and program offerings visit the program's [website](#) or join in the conversation at #MSPTechHire.

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