



**CONTACT:**

Molly Barrett

Marketing & Communications Manager

[molly@gennextmsp.org](mailto:molly@gennextmsp.org)

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**MINNESOTA CRADLE-TO-CAREER PARTNER RECEIVES \$150,000 THROUGH STRIVETOGETHER GRANT PROGRAM TO IMPROVE RESULTS AT MAJOR MILESTONES FOR KIDS**

*Generation Next is one of 21 cradle-to-career partnerships that will advance equity and spread bold strategies to help children and families access opportunity and move up the economic ladder*

**MINNEAPOLIS, MN**—Generation Next, a coalition of civic, business and education leaders from across Minneapolis and Saint Paul dedicated to closing achievement and opportunity gaps, has received \$150,000 from StriveTogether, a national nonprofit working to bring communities together around data to make decisions and improve results for kids. Generation Next will use its grant award to improve student outcomes and address racial opportunity gaps by aligning core cultural competencies of teachers across Minneapolis and Saint Paul through expanded strategic training for all teachers and more focused, coordinated and energetic community efforts toward successful recruitment and retention of teachers of color.

The grant award is part of StriveTogether's Cradle to Career Community Challenge, which seeks to create local change to enable economic mobility. The program's goal is to strengthen and align the many systems, such as education, employment, health and housing, that shape opportunity for children and families in America.

"We are honored to work with StriveTogether and various other education partners across the state of Minnesota on the Accelerator Fund," said Michelle Walker, Executive Director of Generation Next. "In order to orchestrate meaningful change, it is imperative that the region works together to test targeted strategies for the training of all teachers and the recruitment and retention of teachers of color."

The Accelerator Fund grant project will involve multiple partners, including Minneapolis Public Schools, Saint Paul Public Schools, University of Minnesota's College of Education and Human Development, Minnesota State, Saint Paul College, Augsburg

University, Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood, Northside Achievement Zone and the Minnesota Education Equity Partnership (MnEEP). Generation Next aims to identify teacher recruitment and retention strategies by partnering with these organizations and higher education teacher training programs, targeting recruitment efforts and increasing data collection.

As part of the Accelerator Fund grant project, Generation Next has assembled a team of local education leaders to participate in the StriveTogether Leadership Program. The StriveTogether Leadership Program's intended results are to accelerate a partnerships' progress toward demonstrable improvement; catalyze action and alignment across partners to change systems; build capacity to align individual contributions and move partnership along the Theory of Action.

The team of education leaders participating in the program include Michelle Walker, Executive Director of Generation Next; Kate Wilcox-Harris, Chief Academic Officer, Saint Paul Public Schools; Rose Chu, Senior Policy Fellow, Minnesota Education Equity Partnership (MnEEP); Suzanne Kelly, Chief of Staff, Minneapolis Public Schools; and Danielle Grant, President and CEO, AchieveMpls.

Generation Next has been awarded the grant from the Community Challenge's **Accelerator Fund**, which advances equity and systems change in communities that are close to achieving proof point, an important measure of progress along StriveTogether's framework for cradle-to-career work. The 10 selected communities were each awarded a maximum total grant award of \$550,000 over three years to reach proof point. This initiative also combines an intensive leadership development program with targeted training and technical assistance.

Through the Community Challenge, up to \$7 million over the next three years will fund projects across the country that advance equity and spread bold strategies to help students progress from kindergarten to postsecondary completion and a job. During this round of grants, 11 community-based organizations also were selected for the Promising Practices Fund. Communities in the StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network were eligible to apply for the Community Challenge.

"StriveTogether launched the Cradle to Career Community Challenge because we refuse to settle for a world in which a child's ability to thrive is dictated by factors like race or income," StriveTogether President and CEO Jennifer Blatz said. "From partners across the country, we know the urgency of this work and the value of creating lasting change in communities. We are proud to start this year supporting 21 cradle-to-career partnerships to get real results for youth and families."

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### **About Generation Next**

*Generation Next is a coalition of civic, business and education leaders from across Minneapolis and Saint Paul dedicated to closing achievement and opportunity gaps. Generation Next uses rigorous data analysis and community engagement to identify what works and replicate the most promising practices.*

### **About StriveTogether**

*[StriveTogether](#) is a national movement with a clear purpose: help every child succeed in school and in life from cradle to career, regardless of race, zip code or circumstance. In partnership with nearly 70 communities across the country, StriveTogether provides resources, best practices and processes to give every child every chance for success. The StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network reaches 10.5 million students, involves 10,800 organizations and has partners in 30 states and Washington, D.C.*