2019
Leading the Way for Our Next Generation of Girls
A New Leader Steps Up

In May of 2019, Step Up CEO Jenni Luke announced she would depart Step Up at the end of June. During her 10 years as CEO, Jenni spearheaded organizational expansion and refinement. Honing its focus to reach girls living or going to school in under-resourced communities with social emotional learning-based after-school programs and social capital-building mentorship programs, Jenni led the nonprofit through a key mission and brand refresh.

She secured Step Up’s largest gift to date with a three-year grant from the Coach Foundation, enabling expansion to Dallas. This growth to a fourth city marked the organization’s first new market in 10 years. Jenni also revitalized Step Up’s national board of directors.

With the transition, Step Up would seek just its fourth CEO in its 21-year history.

In July, the organization announced that it had selected Delores Druilhet Morton for the role. A nonprofit executive with 20 years of experience designing and leading creative enterprises that make a lasting difference, Morton most recently served as vice president for the West region at City Year.
Before her work at City Year, Morton was the chief program officer for Points of Light, where she designed and delivered programs that mobilized thousands of volunteers to meet education, economic opportunity, emergency response and preparedness needs in communities. She helped Fortune 500 companies drive their philanthropic platforms, including L’Oreal’s Women of Worth and Walt Disney Company’s Give A Day Get a Disney Day, and was honored by President Barack Obama as a 2012 Champion of Change.

“I’m excited to join Step Up at a time when the work is so critical and relevant,” Morton said. “It’s important that all girls – including girls from our marginalized communities – have opportunities to develop the social emotional skills necessary for graduating high school confident, college-bound and career-focused.”

Based in Step Up’s national headquarters in Los Angeles, Delores spent her first few months on the job visiting each Step Up market and meeting with Step Up girls, board members, partners, funders, mentors and staff members.
Dear 9th grade Alondra,
Are you still sitting by yourself? Too anxious to initiate a conversation with anyone, or are you still faking that outgoingness again? Are you sure you know who your friends are, or are you still assuming that everyone will hurt you?

I’m sorry. For everything.
I hated you.

I was mean to you. I didn’t give you the credit for pushing through all of that pain, from elementary to middle school and from all of those bullies who made fun of you for your differences and your strengths. I know it was hard learning English, especially without a lot of support, even at school. At home, you felt so many pressures of fulfilling your parents’ dreams. They came to this country to give you and your little brother a better life. With so many of our family members in gangs or becoming teenage moms, you knew that you had to be the light for your family. You needed help, yet I couldn’t give that to you. I let you suffer in silence. You needed a friend, and I was the first person that turned away from you. When your mind was consumed by the flames of insecurity and pressures, all I ever did was make them spread like a wildfire.

But today marks the beginning of a new chapter in the book of you! From here on out, this day will change your life. I know you’ll get tired of everyone telling you this, but trust me, they’re right. Here’s a piece of advice that will help you throughout high school, and the rest of your life really. It’s something everyone should take to heart. Ready? Okay, my greatest piece of advice for you is...

You are the protagonist of your own life.
Your life is your own.

Every day we wake up with the gift of choice. We can choose what we want to do, who we want to be, and how we act. We may not always be able to choose what life decides to throw our way, but you can always choose how to deal with it, and your attitude when facing it. Always remember this: choose confidence, choose to be a better you, and choose to be the friend you wish you had. But most of all, choose happiness. I want you to be happy, the real, genuine kind. I know in 9th grade, you had everyone fooled. When you smile, everyone sees this bubbly and outgoing girl with bouncy curls, but you can’t fool me. Where does your mask end and your face begin?

As hard as it sounds, choose to reach out. Reaching out is what’s going to help you change your path. Stop suffering in silence, you won’t be able to make it far if you don’t build your support system, there are people out there who are more than willing to take your hand. You will find people who value you for the beautiful soul you are, and will be there to help you grow. The people who truly love you don’t see all the flaws you see. Learn to see yourself through their eyes. These people, this support system, is the Step Up sisterhood, including all of the Step Up mentors and the sister friends you will meet. Step Up will become your second home and you will feel a strong sense of belonging.

Step Up will be the girl-powered family you never knew you wanted, but so desperately needed. Being in Step Up will mean spending more time with your friends after school, it will also help you to meet and connect with girls you never did on a daily basis. You’ll develop deep-rooted, meaningful connections with one another through...
your vulnerability. You’re there to pick up each other’s broken pieces, to cheer each other on when you need it. These girls will be the sisters fate didn’t give you. Who could’ve guessed that Black and Brown girls who live different lives face similar issues. You aren’t alone. You will be comforted. And I promise you, you will start to heal.

Not to spoil the surprise but, one of the most precious memories you will have with Step Up is the Bay Area College Tour in your junior year. Believe me, this trip will be eye opening and wonder-filling. Being able to go up North for the first time and visit all of these colleges will make YOU see yourself at college one day. Make sure to treasure every moment you spend with your Step Up sisters. It will be one of the first reality check moments that you’ll experience, realizing that the college life would be your life the next year.

Standing firm in your convictions and developing a vision for your life is a crucial life lesson Step Up will teach you, one that you will carry forever in your heart. Just because you don’t have the same resources as other privileged students, doesn’t make you, or any other Black or Brown student any less worthy of the same education at a prestigious institute. Despite the lack of resources that you’ve experienced throughout your public school education, you will work hard to seek out higher education because you are worth it. Step Up will teach you to hold your head up high and stand your ground. Step Up will teach you that in order to thrive you must be resourceful, self-sufficient, and resilient. Through career-readiness workshops, Step Up will guide you towards having a clear game plan that will hold you accountable for taking the steps to achieve those goals. So trust me, when you see Step Up and those orange shirts at your school inviting you to join, sign up because it will be one of the best things you can do!

Don’t worry. I know you’re stubborn and won’t listen, but trust me, everything is going to be okay. Today, I wear confidence as if it were any other piece of clothing. Nobody ever made history by playing it safe. Be bold! Don’t let anyone ever tell you that your dreams are out of reach. Only YOU know your full potential. You are more than good enough, and anyone who tells you different is just wrong.

Now, repeat after me:
I am beautiful.
I am smart.
I am worthy.
I will fight on!
Sincerely yours truly,
Me

I am Alondra Anaya, and in the fall of 2019 I will be attending Grand Canyon University! I plan to study biology with an emphasis in pre-med to one day fulfill my dream to enroll in medical school, complete my residency, and become a pediatric oncologist. My life is my own. I decide who I am and where I’m going. I am making a difference in my community by contributing to the diversification of the STEM field and inspiring other girls just like me. With all of the recent news around immigration, I became motivated to learn more. It is through this research and personal experiences, that I learned just how much immigrants were neglected and oppressed. Things like medical insurance and citizenship are so often taken for granted, while many are struggling to see a doctor and living in constant fear. Mark my words, one day, I will come back to my community and provide medical support.

I am going to stay in contact with Step Up to come back and be a mentor. I want to inspire other girls like me, who are the first in their family to go to college and who’s have parents came here to give their children a better life. We also need more girls and people of color in the STEM Fields and I am just getting started!

I owe all of my values and aspirations to my parents, who no matter what, fought for the better living standard and education of their children. Everyday, they remind me of what I’m fighting for and push me to be the best daughter I can be. I wouldn’t be here had it not been for their love and support. And thank you Step Up, for being there to serve as a role model for me, and countless other young girls.
I was introduced to Step Up during my sophomore year of high school. There was a competition between the different grade levels to see who could recruit and retain more girls to the after-school program at Muchin College Prep. The award was a pizza party. So, my friend told me about this competition and the pizza party and that had my attention, so I went to the after-school program with her. The first day I went to the program Jenna Anast, a former program coordinator, greeted everyone with welcoming hellos and hugs. It was such a great feeling to be welcome with open arms in a new community, so I stayed even though we did not win the pizza party.

I did not notice how much I have grown as a person in Step Up until my first time attending Shine and Dine the following summer of 2014. I was wearing an orange Step Up shirt and greeting and chatting with people. This lady came up to me and said, “look at you breaking out of your comfort zone and talking to people with so much joy.” She gave me this big hug and continued to say, “I am so proud of how much you are growing as a young person.” When she told me that, it was one of the happiest moments of that night.

Junior year really made me realize how important it is to have a mentor. I met my first mentor, Robin Shapiro. Robin came to our after-school program session every week and field trips during my junior year. She also came to the Young Luminaries Saturday sessions during my senior year, along with my other mentor I adopted during Young Luminaries, Elise Yu. Both Robin and Elise had supported me a lot during my senior year with the college process and career-readiness. Robin even came to my graduation. Not only did Step Up give me the opportunity to meet great women like Jenna, Robin, and Elise, but they also placed me at an internship at Kelly Allison Photography.

Usually students do not stay in touch with their former supervisors and coworkers, but I did at Kelly Allison Photography. I had the opportunity to come back during winter and spring break. Kelly Allison and Rebekah Zimmerman-Watts were not just people I worked for, they became my family. I say this because my mentors have been one of my biggest support system in college. They have sent me care packages, took me shopping, brought me books, and more. They also supported me emotionally when I was homesick during my freshman year and depressed during my sophomore year. They always motivate and encourage me to keep going. I do not just contact them when I feel like my college life is falling apart or when I’m lost, I also reach out and let them know some of my accomplishments and involvement on campus, too. I am the president of the Student Activities Committee, mentor for both Urban League and first-generation program, project coordinator for Homework Club at Lee Elementary School, and a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated.

I am not sure exactly what the future has in store for me, but I know I will be giving back to my community. I will start my own organization that mentors students in college. I am a rising senior at the University of Illinois at Springfield double majoring in accounting and business with a minor in finance. I am leader. I am confident. I am a proud Step Up alumna, and most of all I am Ahja Howard.
"As women, the greatest service we can do is help each other rise and support each other. Collaborate. Share. Inspire. Empower."
—unknown

This quote reminds me of the gift of courage that was handed to me four years ago when I decided to be a part of Step Up.

I am currently a freshman at the University of North Texas at Dallas. Who I am today, right now at this moment, with sweaty hands and confidence, isn’t the same person I was three years ago. Most days I reminisce about my high school experience. All of the organizations, friends, assignments, procrastination, and constant loss that surrounded me. I used to have the impression that your current situation and circumstances last forever and defined who you are as a person. My sophomore year of high school, I became a part of a powerful organization that made me think otherwise.

I still remember my first day attending Step Up as if it were yesterday. It was a Thursday after school in my art classroom. The room was full of sophomore girls who I had seen here and there around school. I was introduced to a stranger at the time named, Ms. Danielle. Little did I know years later that she would have a huge impact on my growth. At the beginning of program, we got into a circle and were asked, “What’s your temperature,” as in how are you feeling today? My first thought was “why would I want to share how I’m feeling with strangers? Why does anyone even care about my feelings?” When it was my turn, I made up any number just to get the attention off me. Shortly after, I realized some of the girls in the room had the same temperatures and when they were asked why, most of the girls shared. Throughout programming, we did bonding exercises to get to know one another better. Ms. Danielle explained how Step Up is a safe environment and the program is meant to teach us how to build each other up; to encourage one another to take risks in life even if it scares you. Most importantly, Step Up is a mentorship program to guide young women in the right direction in life, and provides the opportunity to meet successful women and learn from them the right steps to accomplish our goals.

My Step Up experience has instilled in me hope and inspiration to always stand in my truth, and I have the power of speaking and using my voice as a woman. The phrase “stand in my truth” means you must own every second of you and who you are as a person. Realizing your aspirations and taking advantage of every resource accessible to you, to help lead and guide you to who you want to become. Throughout Step Up, I have built relationships with women and mentors who have helped me discover myself, and guided me to the Ruby I am meant to be in life.
POWER HOUR TEEN HONOREE
Tanzema, Step Up Class of 2019

A lifetime ago, I was a smart aleck 8th-grader who won an election and became president of my middle school in Queens. Of course, this political advancement had no real responsibilities, but my principal called me ‘assertive, and destined to lead’, and so I convinced myself that I was changing school systems and everything wrong with them. Time flew by, and I was a freshman at The Young Women’s Leadership School of East Harlem, which was a unique experience for me. One of the first few weeks of Step Up, my facilitator had us start a political research project and pick from a list of topics. I had a really hard time choosing just one, because I was interested in them all, but I eventually settled on racial injustices in the U.S. After exploring the topic for the majority of the session, I realized that I cared deeply about that issue, but I still didn’t feel satisfied. I wasn’t satisfied because there were still a dozen issues that I was still curious about. It got me thinking about politics and how working in politics allows you to implement changes that positively impact peoples’ lives, and can address a variety of issues while in office. It was at the end of that 90-minute workshop, that it dawned on me: I wanted to be the mayor of New York City. As mayor of one of the greatest cities in the world, I could help so many people and implement changes that would impact and address so many kinds of issues.

I didn’t share my dream with anyone immediately, for fear that people would laugh and not take me seriously. But a year later, at a Step Up Connections Conference at Barnard (where I recently applied), I finally had the confidence to share with a room packed with nearly 100 of my peers and mentors my goal. The close-knit, supportive and incredibly resourceful community I had built with my facilitator and the girls who would show up to the sessions each week, made a huge contribution in building my confidence. It was in the weekly sessions where we got to explore topics like identity, taking up space, service, and owning your voice, that made me feel empowered, fierce and brave. Afterwards, so many mentors came up to me encouraging me, telling me I was brave, and that they’d be looking out for me.

The more opportunities I was part of at Step Up, the more tangible being mayor of NYC felt. I remember hearing from the founder and CEO of a recruiting firm where 90-something percent of the employees were women. The offices were beautiful, the women were kind and the CEO talked a lot about the culture she created worked for her company— where excellence and self-care were valued. They bring massage therapists in on Fridays twice a month! And I really believe I could do something like that for New York City. Create a culture in this city, where everyone is valued. Before that trip, with Step Up, I didn’t even known recruiting was a career but meeting such a successful woman, doing what I want to do, makes my goal feel even more real.

A few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of attending a meeting at the Disney headquarters with Nadine Karp McHugh. The hour literally flew by, and one of things I appreciated most about our time together was how much of myself I could see in her. We both grew up in Queens and come from families who believe in us, but most importantly— we’re disruptors, not just for the sake of making something different, but for making things better for the people around us. To sit with this incredible female executive, with massive influence, and to realize that though we’re different we really share the same fire, was all the boost I needed to end this final year strong.

Before joining Step Up, I saw lots of possibility for my life. I KNEW I was awesome. I come from an incredible line of women, and I am passionate about a lot of different things. But Step Up helped me be awesome OUT LOUD and without reservation. Step Up helped me get clarity on that passion, strengthened my boldness in pursuing my passion, and has provided countless examples of women lighting up their corners of the world in the same way I want to. Before joining Step Up, I didn’t share my dream with anyone immediately, for fear that people would laugh and not take me seriously. But Step Up helped me get clarity on that passion, strengthened my boldness in pursuing my passion, and has provided countless examples of women lighting up their corners of the world in the same way I want to. Before joining Step Up, I saw lots of possibility for my life. I come from an incredible line of women, and I am passionate about a lot of different things. But Step Up helped me get clarity on that passion, strengthened my boldness in pursuing my passion, and has provided countless examples of women lighting up their corners of the world in the same way I want to.

I’m thankful for the village support I have, and hope that I can count on you to be part of my village around 2030, when I plan to run.
### Step Up’s Impact
#### 2019 BY THE NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of hours of Step Up programming offered during 2019</td>
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<td>Number of hours of Step Up after-school programming offered</td>
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<td>Teens enrolled in Step Up</td>
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<td>Number of girls paired with mentors at one of Step Up’s mentorship conferences</td>
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<td>Teens who report feeling more career-focused after a year of Step Up</td>
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<td>Teens who report feeling more confident after a year of Step Up</td>
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<td>Teens who report feeling better prepared for college after a year of Step Up</td>
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<td>Mentorship offered at Step Up mentorship conferences</td>
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<td>Mentorship offered at Step Up’s Pathways to Professions corporate field trips</td>
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<td>Number of Step Up partner high schools</td>
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<td>Number of Pathways to Professions corporate field trips</td>
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<td>Number of seniors placed in summer internships through Step Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Step Up-hosted mentorship conferences</td>
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PARTNERS
PARTNERS

$350,000+
- Benefit Cosmetics
- PwC
- The JCPenney Foundation
- The Power of Good Fund
- bareMinerals
- Verizon Foundation

$100,000+
- Anonymous
- ArcelorMittal
- CPS Foundation
- Michael Stars
- MJK Family Foundation
- Sergey Brin Family Foundation
- The Terri & Verne Holoubek Family Foundation
- U.S. Bank
- Ulta Beauty
- United Way of Dallas
- Xandr
- Young Women’s Leadership Network

$50,000+
- American Airlines
- Anonymous
- Mattel, Inc.
- NBCUniversal
- SAS
- The Plum Spring Foundation

$30,000+
- Avery Dennison
- Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP
- Benevity Impact Fund
- C’est Moi
- Elizabeth Toon Foundation
- Exelon
- Fox Broadcasting Company
- Good American
- GroupM
- Haymarket Femme
- Howard Hughes
- Hulu
- One Sky Giving Circle
- PepsiCo Foundation
- PwC - Chicago
- She is the Music
- Southern Glazer’s
Southwest Airlines
Stanley and Anita Hirsh Trust
The Eva Longoria Foundation
The Quest Foundation
The Walt Disney Foundation
Visionary Women

$10,000+
Allstate Foundation
American Endowment Foundation
Apple, Inc.
Brent & Ann Wilson Foundation
Ernst & Young LLP
Frog Crossing Foundation, Inc.
Google
Greenberg Glusker
Hearst Magazines
IT Cosmetics

JP Morgan Chase
Ketchum
KPMG
Lockton Dunning Bennefits
Marie Keese Lelash Foundation
Media Temple
Neuberger Berman
OpenSlate
RW Designs Inc.
SAFE Foundation
Shiseido Americas
Skylar Body Inc.
Spotify
Tarte
The John Buck Company Foundation
The Palitz Charitable Lead Annuity Trust
Toofaced Cosmetics

Wells Fargo Foundation

$5,000+
1st Century Bank
A.T. Kearney
Artis
BMO Financial Group
Capitol Group Companies
CBS Entertainment
Civic USA
ConEd
Comerica
CommonWealth Charitable Fund
Disney/ABC Television
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Sugarfina  
T.J. MAXX  
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The Bill Bass Foundation  
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WarnerMedia  
WME Entertainment  
$2,500+

Ariel Investments  
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Brown Advisory  
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Good AdvisHers  
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Grubhub Corporate  
Kinematics Manufacturing  
McGuire Woods  
NiSource  
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Seyfarth Shaw Charitable Foundation  
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Twitter  
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- Catherine Mayone
- Celina Blanks
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STAFF

Alissa Zito, chief communications officer
Amanda Flores, development and events manager
Amber Bel’Cher, director of development
Briana Crowe, teen programs facilitator
Cordelia Tullous, executive director
Delores Druilhet Morton, chief executive officer
Elle Quimpo, teen programs facilitator
Erica Wynn, teen programs facilitator
Gabrielle Clark, teen programs facilitator
Hollis Heath, senior manager, teen programs
Jamie Kogan, director of development
Jennifer Camacho, teen programs facilitator
Jessica Champness, VP, development
Kate Baxter, executive director
Kendal Phelps, teen programs facilitator

Kia Whitney, senior manager, teen programs
Kyra Addison, teen programs facilitator
LaTanya Uyigue, teen programs manager
Leslie Cortez-Sanchez, teen programs facilitator
Mara Meyers, teen programs facilitator
Mayra Vazquez, teen programs facilitator
Melissa Stumpf, finance manager
Moleeta Hong, teen programs facilitator
Morgan Commet, development and events coordinator
Nickie Acero, manager, data strategy, teen programs
Olivia Sulin, chief of staff
Ryann Denham, chief advancement officer
Sarah Dufour, teen programs facilitator
Sofia Lilly, teen programs manager
Venus Devnani McClelland, chief operating officer
FINANCIALS
INCOME
$3,490,282

Donation
47%
$1,650,079

Special Events
24%
$830,648

Grants
28%
$986,057

Interest Dividends
1%
$23,497
Inspiration Awards
12%
$12,564

Power Hour
11%
$11,475

Shine & Dine
8%
$8,400

Other
69%
$73,280

IN KIND
$105,719
THANK YOU