



## CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

390 City Hall  
15 West Kellogg Boulevard  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

Telephone: 651-266-8510  
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July 1, 2013

Robin Bunch  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Grants Management  
Aerospace Building, 6th Floor East  
370 L'Enfant Promenade SW  
Washington, DC 20447

RE: CFDA 93.576: HAP's grant request to the Administration for Children and Families'  
Office of Refugee Resettlement's Refugee Agricultural Partnership Program

Dear Ms. Bunch:

As the Mayor and long-time resident of Saint Paul, I am writing in strong support of an application submitted by Hmong American Partnership (HAP) to the Office of Refugee Resettlement. This project will support HAP's work related to enhancing agriculture skills and knowledge, as well as job creation and economic empowerment for refugee and immigrant agricultural workers in order to support new or expanding agriculture businesses that positively contribute to eliminating food deserts.

Many of my economic initiatives and priorities as Mayor of Saint Paul have focused on revitalization and reinvestment in East Saint Paul, which is home to a large and growing immigrant population. I strongly believe that increasing support and resources for refugees and immigrants will help create jobs and spur economic growth in the city. In particular, encouraging immigrants to become small business entrepreneurs through gainful employment opportunities and training, as well as connecting them to financial products and services such as small and micro business loans, will not only help low-income individuals and families become economically prosperous, it will also stimulate the creation of new employment opportunities for all residents in Saint Paul. Additionally, as agricultural workers learn to grow fresh locally grown produce, they will also be a part of increasing access to healthy foods within their communities.

I have long supported HAP's continuing efforts in providing comprehensive, integrated social services to some of the most vulnerable residents in the city. For more than 20 years, HAP has consistently provided culturally- and linguistically-appropriate services to the community, specifically with refugees and immigrants. Today, HAP is in the unique position—one of the only organizations in the city—of connecting immigrants and refugees from a diverse range of communities in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to business resources and technical assistance that will help them start and/or expand their businesses and create job employment opportunities in the region. With HAP's proposed project, agricultural workers will have additional market channels to distribute their produce, thereby generating more business income and fostering economic growth, and local communities will have increased access to fresh, locally grown vegetables to maintain healthy eating and lifestyles.

I have long been impressed with the work of Hmong American Partnership, especially its expansion in size and programming from a \$3 million agency to a more than \$7 million agency in the past four years. I firmly believe that HAP is highly capable of this proposed work and a forward-thinking leader in employment and economic development in the Twin Cities, and I wholeheartedly support the goals and objectives of HAP's proposal.

Thank you for your consideration of their funding request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher B. Coleman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Christopher B. Coleman  
Mayor