



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

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November 26, 2014

RE: Urban Boatbuilders, Social Venture Partners Investee Applicant

Jeff Tollefson, Board Chairman
Social Venture Partners

Dear Jeff,

I am writing on behalf of Urban Boatbuilders in support of their application to become an investee of Social Venture Partners.

Urban Boatbuilders is a core education partner of the City of Saint Paul through our Sprockets Network and AmeriCorps VISTA Program. For the past two years, Urban Boatbuilders has been a partner alongside other past SVP fundees such as Breakthrough Twin Cities, Genesys Works, the Minnesota Urban Debate League, Rock Star Supply Co. and YouthCARE. In that time, Urban Boatbuilders has doubled its professional staff size, tripled the number of youth served by its Apprenticeship Program and provided invaluable learning opportunities to more than 100 of our city's most vulnerable young people.

Urban Boatbuilders' entrepreneurial spirit and inventive revenue-generating program design, coupled with demonstrated positive outcomes for students, make them an ideal partner for SVP's collaborative model. With the support of SVP's experienced advisors and partners, Urban Boatbuilders will effectively achieve their objective of serving more of the most underprivileged youth in our community through apprenticeships and school-based workshops, continuing to fulfill their mission of positive youth development through hands-on learning.

This year, I visited Urban Boatbuilders in their workshop and at their exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair. While I helped to assemble the frame of a Wilderness Traveler canoe, I met talented young apprentices who were putting in extra hours building boats during their summer break to garner support for their program. This is a strong example of the ability of the Urban Boatbuilders program to truly reach teens while meeting their social, developmental and educational needs.

Urban Boatbuilders is growing, but they need support. I believe SVP has a strong model for guiding the growth of investees, and I see much opportunity to support Urban Boatbuilders at this critical time in its organizational development. With funds to invest in building organizational capacity and added strategic expertise from SVP, Urban Boatbuilders can multiply the impact of its innovative program. Provided with these resources, Urban Boatbuilders will be able to provide even more youth with opportunities for academic and social support and real-world carpentry, job and problem-solving skills. As a long-time supporter, I recommend Urban Boatbuilders as an excellent and committed working partner for Social Venture Partners.

Sincerely,

Christopher B. Coleman
Mayor