



## **Another Step Up Idea Turned to Action!**

Step Up Silicon Valley is happy to announce the successful incubation of our 2015 advocacy project known today as “San Joseans for a World-Class City.” This campaign seeks to offer living wage jobs to local hires through the modernization of the San Jose Business Tax.

Step Up incubates systems change initiatives that begin as community-based ideas to become community-owned and operated projects. The San Joseans for a World-Class City coalition today includes public/government stakeholders, non-profits, and faith-based institutions. Step Up supports the campaign as a coalition member, alongside Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence, The Stride Center, and Justice for Immigrants – Diocese of San Jose.

As a systems change incubator, Step Up offers a platform for community members to turn ideas into action. Our three accomplishments towards successfully incubating this project include:

- Convening diverse community stakeholders to generate innovative solutions to poverty in Silicon Valley,
- Raising funds for polling,
- Polling to engage community members, the results of which indicate community interest in the campaign, and
- Building a coalition.

## **Background**

In February 2015, Step Up Silicon Valley invited Professor Myers-Lipton to present and lead a discussion on his latest publication, *Ending Extreme Inequality*. The kickoff event was the first of the year’s Learning & Development Series, held at the Leavey School of Business at Santa Clara University and facilitated by Professor William A. Sundstrom of SCU. Discussion on an Economic Bill of Rights garnered the interest of over 30 community members in attendance. Step Up convened a follow-up meeting on April 20, 2015 to create a campaign based on the first two rights – the right to a job and living wage – through public works.

Since its inception, the infrastructure public works campaign has developed into “San Joseans for a World-Class City.” Step Up participated in the initial phases with Professor Myers-Lipton. Throughout the summer of 2015, we conducted an initial assessment to gain community-based input on the project and later engaged in polling in November 2015 to gauge the community will to support and move the project forward. The results of the polling show an overwhelming amount of support for a gross receipts tax as a means of funding police, living wage jobs, and repaving our streets.

This project will move forward in 2016 under the leadership of Professor Scott Myers-Lipton of San Jose State University. For more information on our incubation process and the background of the advocacy campaign, read more here (<http://stepupsv.org/step-up-initiatives/retoolingthesanjoselivingwage/>).

Thank you!

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