

Mayor Coleman appoints Eyenga Bokamba as director of Sprockets

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Bokamba will lead Saint Paul's out-of-school-time network.

St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman has appointed Eyenga Bokamba as the new director of Sprockets, Saint Paul's out-of-school-time network.

"Learning doesn't stop when the school bell rings," said Coleman. "Sprockets is one of the best opportunities we have to help close the achievement gap in Saint Paul by increasing access to after-school and summer learning for young people throughout the city. We need a solid leader to keep the Sprockets network strong, and I'm delighted that we've found such a person in Eyenga Bokamba."

"Sprockets is a vibrant example of the community coming together to improve the lives of young people, and I'm thrilled to be part of that," said Bokamba. "I look forward to working with the broad range of stakeholders who are invested in Sprockets to build on our past successes to create an even stronger future for Saint Paul's youth."

Studies suggest young people spend 80 percent of their time – including after school, weekends and summer – outside of the classroom. Recognizing that this "second shift" provides an important opportunity to close the achievement gap, Coleman made after-school learning a foundation of his commitment to education.

In 2011, with the Second Shift Commission community advisory group and Saint Paul Public Schools Superintendent Valeria Silva, Coleman launched Sprockets. Today Sprockets is the leading network of after-school organizations in Minnesota, providing training, professional development, coaching and data sharing for more than 50 organizations that serve over 7,500 young people throughout Saint Paul.

Bokamba brings a diverse background in youth work, non-profits and the arts to her new role with Sprockets. She served most recently as Youth Programs Manager at Pillsbury House, an arts-integrated social service agency. She was responsible for out-of-school time programming for K – 8th grade youth, where she worked with parents, staff, teachers, artists, and literacy tutors to create learning experiences designed to advance the social, emotional and cognitive development of youth. Bokamba is a certified language arts teacher who has received recognition for excellence in teaching and worked in the Hopkins School District for 13 years. Bokamba also served as Minnesota's Youth Engaged in Service Ambassador for the Points of Light Foundation in Washington, D.C. and the National Youth Leadership Council in Minnesota, during which time she co-authored the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, the

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legislation from which AmeriCorps was developed.

Bokamba is a practicing visual artist who was inducted into the National Association of Women Artists in 2011. She is a recipient of a Bush Leadership Fellowship, and holds an undergraduate degree and teaching certificate from the University of Minnesota and a graduate degree from Harvard University.

For more information about Sprockets, visit www.SprocketsSaintPaul.org .