

## STEPUP ANNOUNCES KEY LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

RALEIGH, Jan. 28, 2009 – StepUP Ministry today announced a transition in the key leadership of its organization. Executive director Jennie Armstrong has advised StepUP’s board that she will be leaving her post effective Feb. 1, 2009, and the board has named Steve Swayne, associate director, to succeed her. StepUP is an interfaith, nonprofit organization based in Raleigh that helps at-risk members of the community to become self-sufficient.

Jim Hodge, chair of StepUP Ministry’s board of directors, said, “We were surprised by Jennie’s decision and deeply regret her leaving, but we are extremely grateful for all she has accomplished. She has been an effective leader who is widely respected throughout our community.” He cited several dimensions of growth under Armstrong’s leadership:

- Broadening StepUP’s organization and capabilities, including talented new staff in operations management, development and children’s programming.
- Upgrading internal information and control systems.
- Diversifying funding sources and increasing community outreach.
- Broadening congregational support and participation.
- Enhancing program effectiveness to help more StepUP participants realize their potential.
- Continuing to develop a strong platform for future success.

“It has been a difficult decision, but in the interests of my family and an orderly transition at StepUP, I believe it is the right time to make this move,” said Jennie Armstrong. She explained that her husband, an international marketing executive with a 38-year career at a major industrial company, recently has elected to retire in the first quarter of 2009, which has helped to crystallize her own plans.

“We have put new building blocks in place for StepUP’s future and are realigning its resources to maximize success in a challenging economy. I strongly believe in the mission and work of StepUP, and will miss the day-to-day involvement with its wonderful board and staff, participants and volunteers, as well as our great community of supporters. I am pleased that the board considered my recommendation of Steve Swayne as my successor. He will be an excellent leader, and I plan to continue working with StepUP as a volunteer,” she added.

Hodge said Steve Swayne, who joined StepUP as its first associate director in early 2008, brings diverse experience and proven leadership to his new assignment as executive director. “Steve has an unusual combination of successful entrepreneurial, non-profit and corporate experience that will be a great asset to our organization,” Hodge noted. “In partnership with Jennie and other staff, he already has made a strong contribution to StepUP’s growth and outreach. Steve also has demonstrated a sincere, longstanding commitment to community service,” Hodge said.

Swayne brought 16 years of management experience to StepUP, most recently development, co-ownership, financial and human resources management of a national real estate marketing company that reached \$15 million sales in four years. Previously, he served seven years in operations and area management for Young Life, and held progressively greater community relations and marketing positions with two NBA organizations. He holds a B.A. degree from Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, California. During college years, he also served as a church youth director and taught English in Africa. He and his wife Laura have four young children.

Founded in 1988, Raleigh-based StepUP Ministry is an interfaith community that prepares people who are ready and willing to make positive changes in their lives to become self-sufficient. StepUP’s components include the Jubilee Jobs employment initiative and the Life Skills program, which addresses issues such as financial literacy, physical and mental health and positive relationships. For more information, visit [www.step-up.us](http://www.step-up.us) or call 919/781-0156.

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