



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 3, 2016

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Public Invited to Alameda County Apps Challenge 2016

Community hackathon will focus on fighting poverty and eliminating hunger in the community

Alameda County will hold the fifth in its series of community hackathons on Saturday, February 27 and is urging everyone – the civically active, the technologically gifted and those who simply want to get involved – to participate. The event, dubbed Alameda County Apps Challenge 2016, will take a slightly different approach than its four predecessors. As always, participants will work in teams to develop ideas for using technology to improve local services – but this time their efforts will focus on ways to assist an effort now underway to fight poverty and eliminate hunger in Alameda County.

Alameda County Apps Challenge 2016 will from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, February 27, at the Alameda County Conference Center, 125 12th Street, Suite 400, Oakland. The event will be co-hosted by the offices of Alameda County Administrator Susan S. Muranishi and County Supervisor Wilma Chan. It is being produced and managed by Alameda County's Information Technology Department.

The unique focus of this Apps Challenge is in keeping with a broad community initiative Chan is leading to fight poverty and eradicate hunger in the community. In 2014, to mark the 50th Anniversary of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty," Chan launched the "ALL IN – Alameda County" Initiative that declared a "New War on Poverty" with the goal of eliminating hunger in the community by 2020.

Now, Chan is leveraging the success of the Alameda County's Apps Challenge series – launched in 2012 to engage citizens, broaden understanding of public services and emphasize government transparency – to bring added energy and creativity to the "ALL IN – Alameda County" cause.

"I have watched in amazement over the past four years as our Apps Challenge events have energized our residents and resulted in innovative new tools for making local services more responsive and user friendly," Chan said. "The time is now right to activate the incredible pool

of talent and creativity in our community to help tackle the persistent issues of poverty and hunger so that all Alameda County residents can enjoy a great quality of life.”

As in past Apps Challenge events, prizes will be awarded to participants who come up with concepts, web and/or mobile apps deemed by a panel of judges to most effectively address a need in the community. In addition, participants will again have access to more than 200 data sets available through the Alameda County Data Sharing Initiative at <http://data.acgov.org>. The data is gathered through a wide range of activities performed by Alameda County government – including public safety, environmental protection, transportation, public health, senior services and more.

This time, a \$2,000 Grand Prize will be awarded to the entry that best addresses the problems of poverty and hunger in Alameda County.

Prizes of \$1,000 each will be given to two other entries: that which best uses Open Data made available by Alameda County; and for the best mobile and/or web application.

“With its focus on fighting poverty and hunger in our community, this event holds immense promise for educating the public about the many ways County government is working to meet the basic needs of our residents,” said Susan S. Muranishi, Alameda County Administrator. “I also know this event will result in great new ideas for helping to ensure all residents have enough to eat and the opportunity to fulfill other basic needs.”

The Apps Challenge is part of a nation-wide movement stemming in part from President Obama’s Open Government Initiative, which directed government agencies to increase transparency and implement open data policies. Alameda County was one of the first counties in California to host its own hackathons to promote its Open Data offerings. The County also has held two employees-only hackathons, called Rethink AC, to challenge County workers to come up with apps to help improve customer service and other aspects of County operations. A third Rethink AC event is being planned for later this year.

The cost to participate in Alameda County Apps Challenge 2016 is \$15 for general admission and \$10 for students and seniors. Government employees may participate for free. For more information about the Apps Challenge and to register for the event, please visit: <http://code.acgov.org>.

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