



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Tim Dupuis, Interim Director, Information Technology Department, (510) 481-3700

Laura Lloyd-Jenkins, County Administrator's Office, (510) 272-6984

### **Local Hackers Create Winning Apps at Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012**

*Castro Valley event includes winning submission from two local high school students*

CASTRO VALLEY - A clever mobile app that allows users to check if books are available in the Alameda County Library system – and to reserve those books if they are available – was the first-place winner in Alameda County's first-ever Hackathon on Saturday at the Castro Valley Library.

The entry called BookIt! was the unanimous Grand Prize selection by judges at the end of the day-long Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012. The Apps Challenge culminated with submissions by 24 teams that each developed apps or concepts during Saturday's 5-hour hack period by tapping into public records made available by Alameda County. The three creators of the BookIt! app, which allows users to scan the barcode of any book with a Smartphone and then to check whether that book is available in a County library branch, shared the Grand Prize of \$3,000.

BookIt! edged-out Second Prize-winner, ACPR Finder, a creative app that sifts through County Parks and Recreation Data to provide user-friendly information about local parks. The ACPR Finder app - which includes a map interface listing all park locations and a filter that allows the user to organize parks by specific features like playgrounds, hiking trails and basketball courts – was created by two Castro Valley High School students. The students shared a \$1,500 prize.

A \$500 Third Prize was awarded to creators of SNAPMapper, described as the Yelp for food-stamp users. The mobile app helps people make the most of their funds by organizing stores that accept SNAP, the new federal name for food stamps, by distance, price or quality to help shoppers meet their needs. The app will also offer directions and AC Transit routes.

Other apps submitted includes one that displays points of interest in Alameda County, another that shows where senior services are available in the County, and another that helps the public find a broad array of services simply by entering a zip code.

County Administrator Susan S. Muranishi, who presented the awards along with County Supervisor Nate Miley, said the event was extremely successful, with more than 120 participants who helped identify new ways Alameda County government can strengthen bonds with residents. Muranishi said Alameda County is eager to build on the success of Saturday's Hackathon, and that the public should stay tuned for more Apps Challenge events throughout the County in 2013. "These events are a great way to emphasize the many services the County provides and to tap into the vast pool of talent and creativity available in our community," Muranishi said.

"The Alameda County Apps Challenge was an exciting event," said Supervisor Miley, whose district includes Castro Valley. "It was amazing to see such a wide range of participants from youth to adults who are passionate about open data and how it can be utilized to improve the lives of our citizens. The participants' creativity was extraordinary and I applaud their willingness to develop apps and concepts that improve County services and bring the County into the forefront of technology."