Public Asked to Participate in Alameda County Apps Challenge 2015.1 in Union City
Cash prizes awarded for civic-minded web and mobile applications

Alameda County will continue its push for greater community participation and government transparency on Saturday, April 25, at the **Alameda County Apps Challenge 2015.1**, a unique day-long event designed to challenge the public to create web and mobile applications using Alameda County open data sets. The Apps Challenge will run from **8:30 am to 6:00 pm on Saturday, April 25 at James Logan High School, 1800 H Street, Union City.**

Alameda County Apps Challenge 2015.1 is the fourth community hackathon sponsored by Alameda County in its effort to increase citizen engagement and broaden public understanding of local government by opening access to data created and kept by County agencies and departments. The Union City event is expected to bring together more than 120 software developers, community members, activists and entrepreneurs for a full day of creativity, collaboration and innovation.

The upcoming Apps Challenge is being co-hosted by the offices of Alameda County Administrator Susan S. Muranishi and County Supervisor Richard Valle, whose district includes Union City. The event is being produced and managed by Alameda County's Information Technology Department.

"This event will offer a new opportunity for us to raise public awareness about the many facets of County government," Muranishi said. "It's also an exciting way we can leverage the vast pool of talent and creativity available in our community to enhance the services we provide."

Added Supervisor Valle, a James Logan High School graduate: "These Apps Challenge events reflect some of the great new approaches we in local government are taking to engage the public. These efforts are opening doors to new ideas on how we can better meet the needs of the people we serve."

A Grand Prize of $3000 will be awarded to the most inventive and user-friendly app or concept that benefits Alameda County residents, businesses and visitors. A second prize of $1500, a third prize of $500 and honorable mentions will also be awarded.

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 launched its series of community Apps Challenges in 2012 and 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.

At the Apps Challenge, Alameda County invites participation from residents of all skill levels and age groups: professional and novice developers, high school and college students, seniors, and residents with no technical background but a passion for civic engagement. Each team at the hackathon will include a mixture of coders and "idea" people working together to create functional apps or develop app concepts.

Participants in the April 25 event will have access to the nearly 180 data sets available through the Alameda County Data Sharing Initiative at http://data.acgov.org. The data covers a wide range of topics, including public safety data, a listing of Certified Green Businesses, public health data, maps of senior services and more.

Alameda County's first three Apps Challenges were held in Castro Valley, Berkeley and Dublin. All three events drew more than 400 participants and resulted in dozens of clever apps, many of which continue to be used in the community. Prize-winning apps included:

- **AC BookIt!** – a clever mobile app that allows users to check if a book is available in the Alameda County library system, reserve the book and get the library's address. Available on the Apple App Store.
- **ACcess Help** – a mobile app that helps users prepare for a disaster and find help in a calamity's aftermath.
- **Green By Me** – an app that allows users to locate green businesses across Alameda County
- **ACPR Finder** - an app developed by high school students that sifts through County Parks and Recreation Data to provide useful information about local parks, trails and recreation facilities.

The cost to participate in Alameda County Apps Challenge 2013.1 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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