NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12ᵗʰ Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: http://www.fcc.gov
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC. 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Dec. 15, 2011

FCC MEDIA CONTACT:
Neil Grace, (202) 418-0506
Email: neil.grace@fcc.gov

KNIGHT FOUNDATION CONTACT:
Marc Fest, (305) 908-2677
Email: fest@knightfoundation.org

FCC CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI AND KNIGHT FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE WINNERS OF THE FIRST-OF-ITS KIND 'APPS FOR COMMUNITIES' CHALLENGE

$100,000 IN PRIZES AWARDED FOR APPS THAT BRING LOCAL INFORMATION TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

MENLO PARK, Calif. (Dec. 15, 2011) — Thirteen software applications have won a combined $100,000 in prizes as part of the Apps for Communities Challenge, a first-of-its-kind, nationwide contest for "apps" that deliver personalized, actionable information to people least likely to be online. FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski and Knight Foundation National Program Director Damian Thorman announced the winners today at the Silicon Valley offices of venture capitalist Marc Andreessen, who served as one of the challenge's judges.

Among the grand prize winners are apps that help people find jobs, connect the homeless with services and let public transportation riders know when their bus is arriving.

The challenge is part of the Federal Communications Commission and Knight Foundation's efforts to foster digital inclusion and promote broadband adoption. The contest sought to take advantage of the local, public information coming online - on topics from education to health care, child care, government services and jobs – and make it easily accessible to the public. Contestants were asked to turn that information into content, apps and services that expand people's choices on critical issues.

Genachowski said, "The costs of digital exclusion are high and getting higher. Five years ago, if you didn't have broadband you'd probably be okay. But today its not like that. When people think about broadband and opportunity, they thought someday we'd have great apps. That day is here, with apps that will let you know how long the bus takes to arrive, apps to help the homeless access important services and apps that help people who don't have work find jobs."

"Technology is increasingly providing new opportunities to help strengthen our democracy. Yet, that potential will only be realized when more Americans have Internet access," **said Thorman, who leads Knight Foundation's** Technology for Engagement Initiative. "We are excited by the fact these winners are using relevant information to entice more people to get online, and for using technology to solve everyday, local problems."

The 'Apps for Communities' grand prize winners are:

- **Grand Prize:** Yakb.us, (www.yakb.us) Ryan Resella: Provides bus riders with arrival times – in English and Spanish – when a five-digit bus stop number displayed onsite is texted to the local transit agency. YAKB.us is currently being used in Arlington County and Charlottesville, Va. and Santa Clarita, Calif.

- **Second Grand Prize:** Homeless SCC (http://homeless-scc.org) Curtis Chang: Connects homeless people and families with services according to their specific needs and eligibility. The web-based app, being used in San Jose, Calif., also tracks when an agency makes a referral, as a way to help agencies increase their efficiency.

- **Third Grand Prize:** Txt2wrk (http://www.txt2wrk.net) Elise Ackerman, Jonathan Chan, Dave Chiu, Lawson Kight, Roger Ly and Alex Tam: Helps parolees, the homeless and other job seekers compete on a more level playing field by allowing them to apply for jobs online thorugh a text-to-speech delivery of job postings on any mobile phone. Job seekers are alerted to new job postings, can listen to job descriptions, and apply for jobs – all without a connection to the Internet.

The runners-up, winning $1,000 each, are:
- Access Together (www.accesstogether.org) John Schimmel: Enabling people with disabilities, their family and friends to crowdsource a community's accessibility information.
- PhillySNAP (www.phillysnap.com) Katey Metzroth, Mark Headd, Deng-Shun Chang, and Tim Wisniewski: Connecting low-income, technologically isolated Philadelphia residents with fresh local food sources.
- Places Kids Go: (www.placeskidsgo.com) Ningning Lin, Jerry Lin and Andrew Chen: Simplifying searches for children's activities in San Jose, Calif.
- PREPPED kids (www.preppedkids.org) Damien Leri, Ian Bennett, and Stanton Wortham: Helping low-income families in Norristown, Pa. more easily access preschool and pediatric services in their local communities.
- Talk with Sam (www.talkwithsam.com) Vikram Pant*:* Providing residents with the ability to see – and comment on – the bills of elected officials near them, based on their location.

In addition, the challenge offered bonus prizes in a variety of categories to help underserved populations:
- Best Design and Visualization - $10,000 Bonus: Homeless SCC, Curtis Chang (see description above)
- Most Replicable Application -$10,000 Bonus: Access Together, John Schimmel (see description above)
- App with the best use of SMS - $5,000 Bonus: txt2wrk, Elise Ackerman, Jonathan Chan, Dave Chiu, Lawson Kight, Roger Ly and Alex Tam (see description above)
- App that best impacts people with limited digital proficiency - $5,000 Bonus: Prepped Kids (see description above)
- App that best impacts people with limited English literacy - $5,000 bonus:: Off to Market (http://mertonium.com/off-to-market/), John Mertens*:* Using SMS to help people find fresh food in their area.

For more information on the contest, visit http://appsforcommunities.challenge.gov.

About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation: Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. The foundation believes that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged. For more, visit KnightFoundation.org.

--FCC--

For more news and information about the FCC please visit www.fcc.gov