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Press Contacts:

Amanda Kim | County of San Mateo-Human Services Agency | 650-995-3733 | hsa-communications@smchsa.org

Lauren Reid | Code for America | 415-200-9468 | lr@codeforamerica.org

Code for America Team Arrives in San Mateo County to Strengthen the Food Safety Net
Project to develop tech sector solutions to end hunger in the county

Redwood City, Calif.—Today, the County of San Mateo Board of Supervisors welcomed three Code for America Fellows. The county is one of just ten sites selected for the 2013 fellowship program which was launched four years ago by Code for America, a San Francisco-based non-profit that matches technology sector skills to local governments.

The fellows, who have left their private sector jobs, will spend the next ten months working on civic solutions to end local hunger in San Mateo County where there is an annual shortfall of 47 million meals according to the Hunger Index developed by the Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo County and Santa Clara University's Leavey School of Business. They will also have the opportunity to work on additional projects identified over the course of their fellowship.

"We are delighted to not only move our food safety net into the 21st century" said Supervisor Adrienne J. Tissier, "but also to share the technologies developed here to ease hunger pangs in other communities."

As part of the program, Code for America fellows will spend a month in residence, gathering data and meeting with clients and other community stakeholders to identify the factors that lead to food insecurity. After the research phase, they will spend seven months developing solutions. Once those solutions are tested, they will be made available to other municipalities who face the same challenges.

As a result of the Code for America Fellowship program, post-Katrina residents of New Orleans can track the status of blighted properties in their city and parents in Boston can use a mobile app to find out when their children's school bus will arrive.

Founded in 2009, Code for America partners with local governments to foster civic innovation by embedding developers and designers in local governments to collaborate with municipal leaders. San Mateo County is one of 29 municipalities that applied for the 2013 fellowship cycle.

"I am incredibly thrilled to be part of San Mateo County's project because of its direct impact on the community. I look forward to getting to know the San Mateo County community and collaborating with the Human Services Agency—together we'll come up with innovative solutions that will help increase access to food benefits and services for eligible residents," said Moncef Belyamani, 2013 Code for America Fellow.

San Mateo County's project is sponsored by Philanthropic Ventures Foundation, and the County of San Mateo County Manager's Office and Human Services Agency.

San Mateo County Fellow Bios:

Anselm Bradford

Anselm is lecturer in digital media at AUT University in New Zealand. He has worked with Apress/friends of ED, O'Reilly Media, Peachpit Press, and Lonely Planet on book titles in the areas of visual communication, web, and interactive media. He has authorship credit on HTML5 Mastery and CSS3 Solutions (Apress).

Moncef Belyamani

Moncef is passionate about solving problems, learning by doing, and giving back to the community. Most recently, he led the Automation effort on the Mobile Team at AOL, and worked on various iOS and Android apps. In his spare time, he runs several music-related websites, and a programming blog where he authored a popular tutorial about setting up a development environment on a Mac. Moncef earned his Electrical Engineering and Music degrees from UVA, and speaks English, French, and Arabic.

Sophia Parafina

Sophia has worked on a wide range of projects ranging from helping establish the Pic Macaya Biosphere Reserve in Haiti to building information architecture for pipelines, airports, and railways. Most recently, she wallowed in data and liberated it from stovepipes. Previously, she managed projects for the CIA's venture capital firm, founded and sold an enterprise software company, and worked with non-profits.

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County of San Mateo, Human Services Agency

The County of San Mateo, Human Services Agency assists individuals and families to achieve economic self-sufficiency, promotes community and family strength, and works to ensure child safety and well-being.

Code for America

Code for America helps governments work better for everyone with the people and the power of the web. Founded in 2009, Code for America held its inaugural fellowship in 2011 with 19 fellows and three cities. Through the Fellowship program, Code for America makes it easy and attractive for the web generation to give back by connecting developers and designers with cities to work together to innovate. The Code for America Accelerator, launched late 2012, supports disruptive civic startups, and Brigade helps organize hackers locally to reuse and deploy civic software. Code for America is reimagining government for the 21st century.