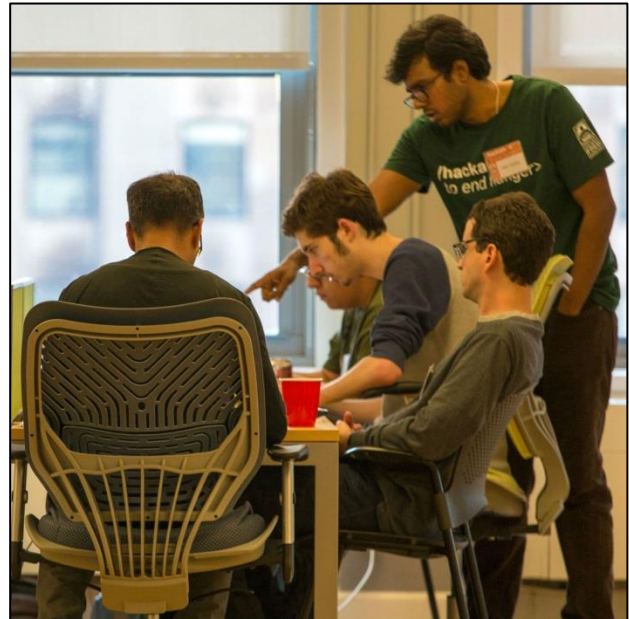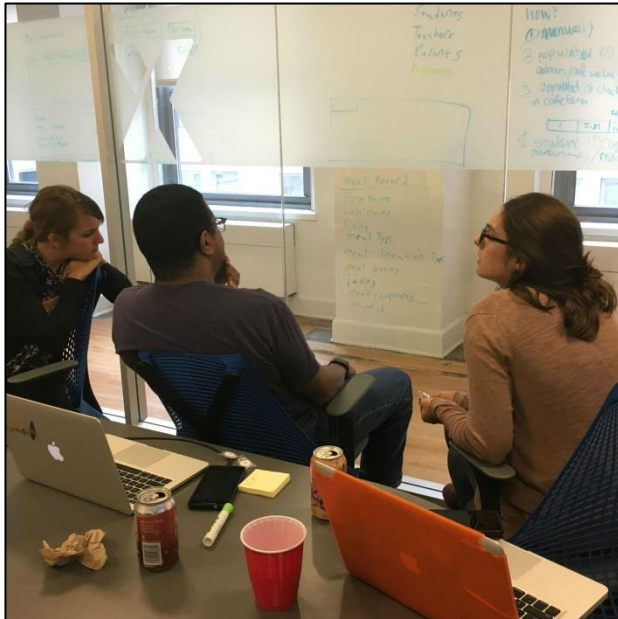# /hackathon to end hunger>

LET'S CRACK THE CODE ON HUNGER

2nd Annual Hackathon to End Hunger
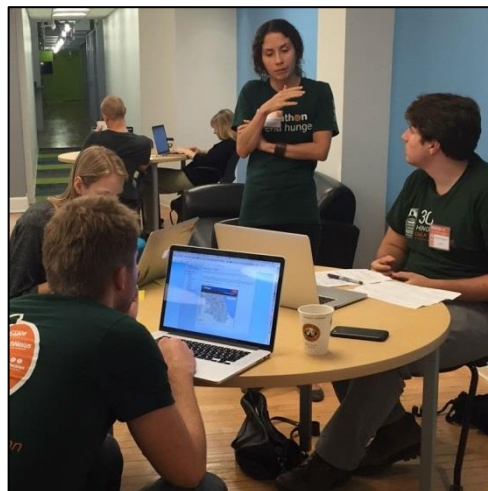
Saturday, September 23, 2017

Strata Decision Technology, in the AON Center

(200 East Randolph St, 50th Floor)

Speaking Program/Breakfast: 8 a.m.-8:30 a.m.

Hackathon Start: 8:30 a.m.

Hackathon End: 8:30 p.m.

*Registration includes t-shirt as well as breakfast, lunch, dinner and light snacks throughout the day.
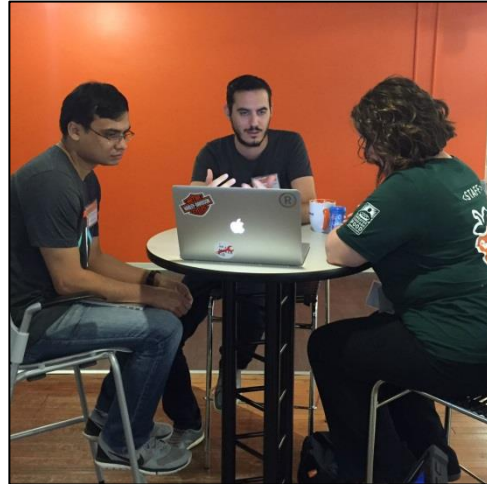

Join the Greater Chicago Food Depository (GCFD) for the 2nd Annual Hackathon! Last year's inaugural event brought together nearly 75 members of the tech community to use their skills and expertise to help us find different solutions to ending hunger. By approaching hunger from a technological lens, we hope to get a fresh perspective and different angle on some of our biggest challenges. Data shows more than 812,000 men, women and children living in Cook County - 1 in 6 people – receive food from the Food Depository's network each year. Last year, the Food Depository distributed nearly 72 million pounds of food, 37% of which was fresh produce. Food pantries in our community are serving 70 percent more individuals than they were in 2008 - making the Hackathon more vital than ever.

Last year's event provided teams the chance to analyze data and better understand the ways in which children accessed food resources in Cook County. Building on those efforts and harnessing the energy, output and experience of participants, this year we're focusing on how GCFD collects, tracks and utilizes participant data. From getting real-time food insecurity rates down to neighborhood level to tracking the impact of food access over time, there are opportunities for GCFD to better capitalize on data to make the most informed decisions about how to best serve our neighbors in need.

Because GCFD's Hackathon is only one day, the goal is to outline ideas to solve the challenge, and not necessarily to build/develop an output on-site. There is a follow-up team in place to project manage, steward and make progress to further implementation of winning idea(s).

/hackathon
to end hunger>

Understanding your community is key to every organization, and the Greater Chicago Food Depository is no different. While the Food Depository is utilizing every available data source, we know there is helpful, yet uncollected, data that would further our mission. Additionally, there are more ways to utilize our data to make the best-informed decisions about how to best serve our neighbors in need.

Focus area #1:

Capturing rates of food insecurity at the neighborhood level in real-time

Insight: Knowing how many people lack access to enough nutritious food and what communities they live in helps us to make the most informed decisions about how best to reach them and to raise awareness of the problem.

Unfortunately, this information is very difficult and costly to collect with the tools and methods currently available. Moreover, at present, there is no real –time, on the ground, standardized data collection of food insecurity rates that directly represent the voices of Cook County residents. Instead, we measure need for food assistance by proxy using a national food insecurity statistical model of Feeding America, local income and unemployment census data, and field experience to estimate the need for food assistance. Public data sets, while invaluable, have at least a two year lag between collection and release, and field knowledge can be difficult to standardize across our service area of Cook County. Add to this dilemma that GCFD has very little funding to spare and people in need can often be very hard to reach, including older adults that may not use technology and busy working families, many with children and with disabilities.

Challenge: How would your team design a system to collect food insecurity rates in a way that is statistically representative at the community area level? Food insecurity is currently measured by the USDA food insecurity screening module, of which there are validated, abridged versions (e.g. 2 question screener). Selecting other questions to tack on to the food insecurity screen would be very helpful to improving our programming as well. Please see the materials on food insecurity and screening questions in the data file for more detailed information.

Focus area #2

Tracking access to nutritious food on the impact of client health

Insight: Access to nutritious foods is critical to preventing health complications while also providing the foundation for treatment and recovery from illness. Conversely, food insecurity is associated with a wide variety of poor health outcomes and higher health care costs. Indeed, households suffering from food insecurity are more likely to show poor cognitive and emotional development in children and depression and poor health in adults. Moreover, a recent study out of Ontario found that total health care costs for adults in marginally food insecure households were 23% higher than in food insecure households, 49% higher for those in moderately food insecure households, and 121% higher for severely food insecure households.[1]

In response, the Food Depository partners with locations to test ideas for connecting the dots between food assistance and health care. One example is the Food Depository's provides a Fresh Truck response at partner clinics across Chicago, offering nutritious food to those who have screened as positive for food insecurity through their doctor at that location. The Fresh Truck model also provides SNAP referrals for clients.

While perfectly aligned with the research on the intersection of health and food access, we have only scraped the surface in terms of understanding how and to what extent this collaborative intervention is improving the health of clients. In order to improve and expand on this program, we need to better tell the story of its impact and, eventually, the cost savings associated with it. We are able to track the number of patients at each fresh truck distribution, yet HIPAA requirements and the difficulty of measuring long-term clinical outcomes and their connection to a reduction in healthcare costs present huge obstacles to moving beyond this measurement.

Recent survey data collected from a Fresh Truck research pilot of a nutrition-based phone app revealed that 91% of clients have a phone, and among those 73% have a smartphone. Of those that have smartphones, 47% own an Android and 22% own an iPhone. This usage data highlights a novel opportunity to offer clients a mobile-based tool that could connect clients to information on GCFD and other community based resources while also serving as a resource to track and evaluate Fresh Truck usage.

Challenge: What solution would your team design in order to track and collect information from clients across our partner network on the impact of access to nutritious food on their health, while incentivizing those same users to stay engaged with program supports for long term stability and impact?

What do I get if I win?

Aside from helping the Food Depository further its mission of *providing food to hungry people while striving to end hunger in our community,* we also have some great prizes! Each member of the winning team will receive a $25 gift card to Shake Shack and a pair of Bluetooth headphones.

When does registration end?

In case you'd like to invite friends and colleagues to join you, registration closes at 12 noon on Friday, September 22nd. All participants need to register in advance to be added to the Aon Center's security guest list.

What do I need to bring with me?

Your laptop, a power cord and your thinking cap.

Where do I go when I arrive at the AON Center?

Please check in at the reception desk and let them know you are attending the Hackathon at Strata Decision Technology. All participants registered before noon Friday, September 22 will be on a guest list. Use the elevator bank for floors 38-54; Strata is on the 50th floor. Once you arrive, signs and staff will direct you further.

How are groups decided?

Groups are formed organically the morning of the event around ideas/approach and not necessarily around existing relationships.

How many people can be on a team?

There is no set number for team members, but they will vary between 6 – 8 people.

Where can I get more information on the Food Depository?

You can find general information about the Food Depository and our programs on our website: www.chicagosfoodbank.org. We will also be posting information on our Slack channel (hackhunger.slack.com) for additional resources throughout the event.

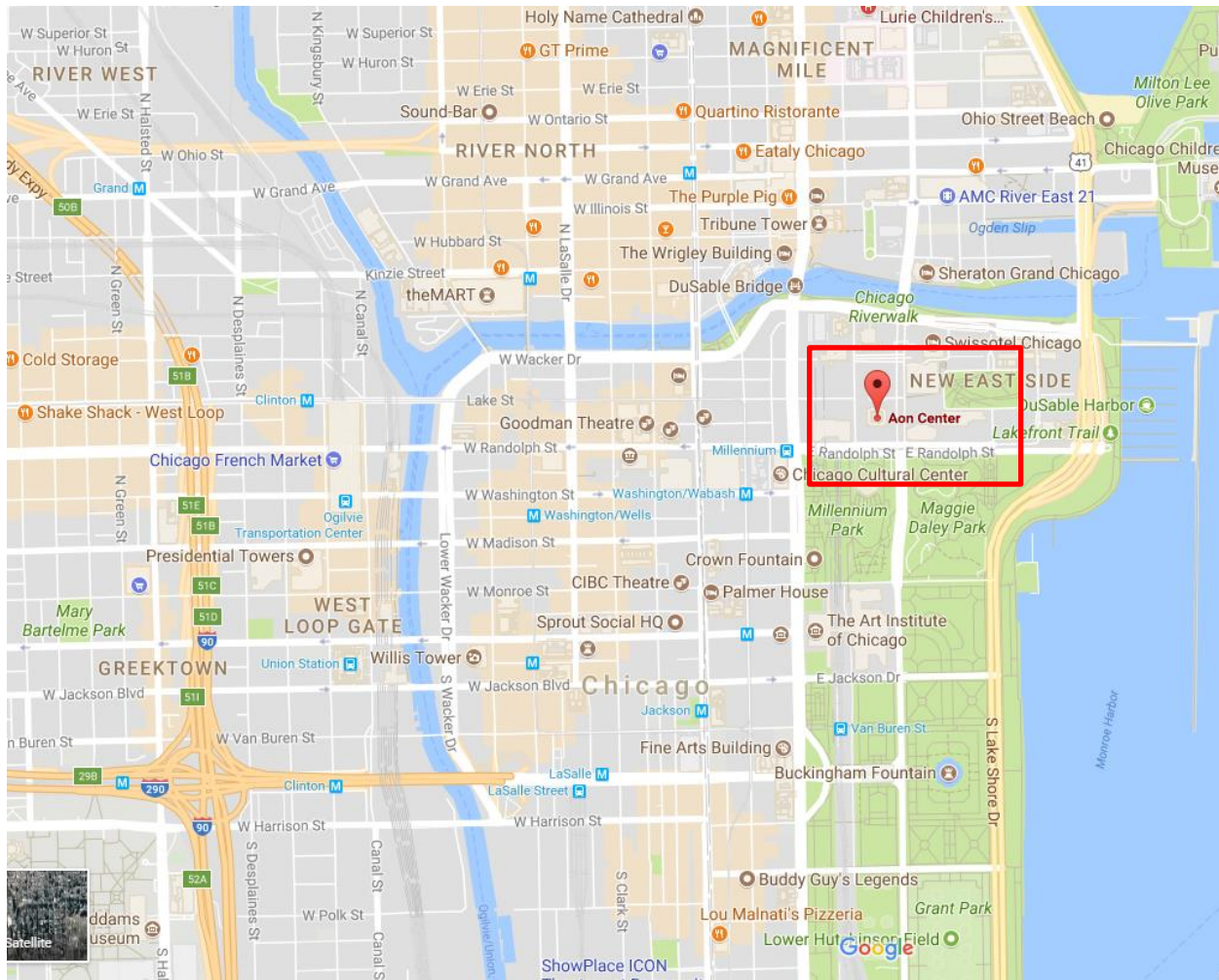**Getting to the Hackathon via CTA:**

CTA Trains:
The closest stations are Blue Line Washington; Red Line State & Lake; Brown/Green/, Orange/ Pink/Purple Lines Washington & Wabash. Walk east on Randolph to the Aon Center.

CTA Buses:
From the North: Routes 3, 4, 20, 26, 60, 66, 124, 143, 147, 151, & 157 stop at Michigan & Washington. Walk north to Randolph, then east on Randolph to the Aon Center.

From the South: Routes 3, 6, 20, 26, 66, 124, 143, 147, 155 & 157 stop at Michigan & Randolph. Walk east on Randolph to the Aon Center.

From the West: Routes 4 and 60 stop at Randolph & Michigan. Cross the street and walk east on Randolph to the Aon Center.

Metra: Please reference the current Metra schedules to find your closest station, schedules and line.

Driving: We recommend using your favorite maps/traffic tool to input the address to your parking location.

Parking: If you opt out of public transport, please note there is no free parking for this event. There are several pay garages in the area, including one at the AON Center. We recommend (but are not affiliated with) SpotHero to find affordable all-day parking nearby.