

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 – was the first-place winner in Alameda County’s first-ever “Hackathon” earlier this month at the Castro Valley Library.

The entry called “BookIt!” was the unanimous grand prize selection by judges from submissions by 24 teams.

The three creators of the BookIt! app, which allows users to scan the barcode of any book with a smart phone shared the grand prize of \$3,000.

The second prize-winner was 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 included 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 the 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.

# Teens Among Winners in Computer App Contest

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