FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact
Bradley Holt
Code for America Brigade Captain, Code for BTV
(802) 383-4737 ext. 11
bholt@codeforamerica.org

CodeAcross BTV at Fletcher Free Library on February 22 & 23

Two-Day Event in Burlington to Use Open Data as a Tool to Address Real-World Issues & Opportunities

BURLINGTON, Vt., February 20, 2014 – CodeAcross BTV is a hands-on event focused on leveraging open data for community benefit. Participants will use open data as a tool to address real-world issues and opportunities in their communities.

Open data is data that is openly available for use by third parties, often provided by a government department or agency. Open data can lead to greater transparency, more accountability, citizen participation, innovation, and improved effectiveness and efficiency.

The City of Burlington Mayor's Office is working on an open data platform. The State of Vermont is also working on its own open data portal. The inaugural Vermont Open Data Summit was hosted by the Vermont Center for Geographic Information (VCGI) this past October, beginning a statewide discussion about open data. CodeAcross BTV is an opportunity to build on this momentum and demonstrate the value of open data in Burlington and Vermont.

"CodeAcross BTV is an excellent opportunity to use open data for the benefit of our community in Burlington and others across the state," said **Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger**. "I am appreciative of the work Code for BTV and others to help improve transparency and governance, and I am pleased that the City of Burlington will be able to contribute a substantial amount of data through our new open data platform in advance of the event."

Those who might be interested in participating include:

- Community members with a passion for improving their communities
- Community organizers
- Non-profits and mission-driven organizations
- Journalists and bloggers
- Urbanists
- Civic hackers, developers, designers and makers
- Open data advocates
- Government officials and staff

Following opening remarks by Mayor Weinberger, Code for BTV will facilitate a workshop that will give participants an opportunity to uncover issues and opportunities that can be addressed using open data. Participants with a diversity of perspectives—from coders to open data advocates—are strongly encouraged to attend this workshop.

CodeAcross BTV is part of CodeAcross—an international weekend of locally held events. There are 45 events being held in communities around the globe. Each event is unique, but all share the theme of "Let's take the data beyond transparency"—and focus on using data to enhance communities. This is the third annual CodeAcross.

"CodeAcross is an opportunity for citizens to participate in building stronger, more open and engaging governments where they live, but also to be connected to a global network of citizens who are doing the same thing around the world," said **Catherine Bracy, Code for America's director of community organizing**. "The goal is to build long-lasting communities who can collaborate with their governments to make cities work better."

The international effort of CodeAcross is organized by Code for America, the Sunlight Foundation, and the Open Knowledge Foundation, and is sponsored by Esri and Microsoft. The local CodeAcross BTV event is organized by Code for BTV, a Code for America Brigade, and is sponsored by Front Porch Forum; Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Office of the Creative Economy; CCTV Center for Media & Democracy; and Vermont Council on Rural Development's Digital Economy Project. Other producers include Fletcher Free Library, Found Line, and Big Heavy World.

When: February 22, 2014, 10:00AM - 6:00PM
February 23, 2014, 12:00PM - 6:00PM

Where: Fletcher Free Library
235 College Street, Burlington, VT

The full list of CodeAcross events is available at: codeforamerica.org/codeacross

For more about the local CodeAcross BTV event, visit: codeforbtv.org/events/2014/02/codeacross-btv/

###

About Code for BTV

Code for BTV is an official Code for America Brigade that facilitates sustainable collaborations on civic software and open data projects between coders, designers, and organizations (both governmental and non-governmental) in the greater Burlington, Vermont area. Code for BTV hosts events for civic hackers to come together and work on building and reusing civic apps and support open data initiatives. For more, visit codeforbtv.org.

About Code for America

Founded in 2009, Code for America (CfA) is a national nonprofit that partners with local governments and citizens to foster civic innovation. By working to reinvigorate civic participation, accelerate the civic startup marketplace, facilitate collaboration between government leaders, and build new tools that enhance and strengthen communities, CfA is helping governments solve old problems in new ways. CfA is working towards a government by the people, for the people, that works in the 21st Century. For more information, watch Founder Jennifer Pahlka's TED talk at codeforamerica.org/TED or go to codeforamerica.org.

Code for America contact: Lauren Reid, (415) 200-9468 or lr@codeforamerica.org

About Sunlight Foundation

The Sunlight Foundation is a nonpartisan nonprofit that uses cutting-edge technology and ideas to make government transparent and accountable. Visit SunlightFoundation.com to learn more about Sunlight's projects, including PoliticalPartyTime.org and influenceexplorer.com.

About Open Knowledge Foundation

The Open Knowledge Foundation founded in 2004 is a worldwide network of people who are passionate about openness, using advocacy, technology and training to unlock information and turn it into insight and change. Our aim is to give everyone the power to use information and insight for good. Visit okfn.org to learn more about the Foundation and its major projects including SchoolOfData.org and OpenSpending.org.

Font: Alegreya by Juan Pablo del Peral [OFL (SIL Open Font License)]