

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of Communications

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**White House Highlights Open Government and Civic Hacking “Champions of Change”**

WASHINGTON, DC – On Tuesday, July 23rd, the White House will honor 15 leaders and organizations as open government and civic hacking “Champions of Change.” As entrepreneurs, innovators, organizers, and community leaders, these “Champions of Change” have made a tremendous positive impact by building high-tech tools to help health workers and disaster-response crews better serve communities; piloting innovative programs to involve traditionally disengaged communities in local governance; using new technologies to enhance government transparency and collaboration; and more.

When presenting his new management agenda earlier this month, President Obama said, “... We the people recognize that this government belongs to us, and it’s up to each of us and every one of us to make it work better... We all have a stake in government success -- because the government is us.”

The White House Champions of Change program was created as part of President Obama’s Winning the Future Initiative. Through this program, the White House highlights individuals, businesses, and organizations whose extraordinary stories and accomplishments positively impact our communities.

To watch this event live, visit [www.whitehouse.gov/live](http://www.whitehouse.gov/live) at 10:00 am ET on July 23rd. To learn more about the White House Champions of Change program and nominate a Champion, visit [www.whitehouse.gov/champions](http://www.whitehouse.gov/champions).

**Steve Spiker, Director of Research & Technology at the Urban Strategies Council  
Moraga, CA**

Steve Spiker (Spike) is the Director of Research & Technology at the Urban Strategies Council, a social change nonprofit supporting innovation and collaboration based in Oakland for almost 25 years. He leads the Council’s research, spatial analysis, civic innovation, open data, and technology efforts. Spike has research experience in community development, housing, criminology, spatial epidemiology and reentry issues. He loves data, visualization, GIS and strategic technology implementation, especially open source tech. Spike is the co-founder of OpenOakland, a Code for America Brigade and is helping guide government technology decisions and civic

engagement in the East Bay. In 2012 Spike was chosen as one of the Next American City Vanguard class. He is an outspoken supporter of open data and open government and speaks across the USA about data driven decision making. He also campaigns to end human trafficking and runs Stealing Beauty Photography.

**Travis Laurendine, Founder and CEO of LA Labs  
New Orleans, LA**

Travis Laurendine doesn't fit in the typical bio box any more than his hair fits into the typical hat. As a serial entrepreneur he has been on the cutting edge of both the web startup and entertainment industry for nearly 10 years. He launched his first web startup while an Economics major at Vanderbilt University, where he was also selected as the first Vanderbilt student with a film to make it in the Nashville Film Festival. When Hurricane Katrina struck his hometown of New Orleans, he stayed back in the city and found himself wearing the hats of startup CEO, concert promoter, restaurant general manager, standup comic, film/video producer and director, MTV News journalist, band manager/agent, investor, hackathon organizer, Entrepreneur-In-Residence, and cultural ambassador. Recently, he founded Louisiana's first hackathon organization, CODEMKRS, which is currently being transformed into Louisiana's only modern code school. This summer he has organized hackathons for giant music festivals JazzFest and Bonnaroo and is currently planning San Francisco's Outside Lands' first hackathon. His official job is being the founder and CEO of LA Labs, a startup laboratory focused on the marriage of entertainment and technology that uses New Orleans as the ultimate creative incubator. He is thankful for his loving family and friends and the daily inspiration he gets from the great city of New Orleans.

**Scott Phillips, Co-Founder and CEO of Isocentric Networks  
Tulsa, OK**

Scott Phillips is the co-founder and CEO of Isocentric Networks, an advanced data center services company based in Tulsa, OK. He was previously the founder and CEO of a sensor technology company whose work included a project for NASA for use on a manned mission to Mars. Scott is also a founding board member of Fab Lab Tulsa, a 21st Century non-profit community center for innovation, entrepreneurship, and STEM education through a partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Scott's current passion lives at the nexus of entrepreneurship, the maker movement, and civic hacking, three transformative movements that he believes are democratizing how we live, work and play. According to Scott, it is easy to understand the impact of civic hacking on government when you view it in three steps; give citizens transparency, give citizens a voice, then give citizens ownership.

**George Luc, Co-Founder and CEO of GivePulse  
Austin, TX**

George Luc is Co-Founder and CEO of GivePulse, a social network that matches people to causes and enables nonprofits, companies and affinities to manage volunteers, list events and track service hours in one central community. GivePulse launched earlier this year in 2013 and has since tracked over 100K service hours and mobilized over 5K volunteers in Austin alone. George has a BS and MS in Computer Science from Virginia Tech with an emphasis in Human Computer Interaction. He spent much of his early career developing technology for people with disabilities and has worked with companies like Daylert, IBM, ESO and HomeAway. He serves as a board member of City of Austin Volunteer & Service, Austin Convention Center and Visitor's Bureau, KLRU, Open Door Preschool, and was a City Commissioner for Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities.

**Craig Michael Lie Njie, CEO, Kismet World Wide Consulting  
Mountain View, CA**

Mr. Lie Njie is CEO of Kismet World Wide Consulting, which he founded in 2002. Lie has over 20 years of professional experience and currently consults world-wide on a variety of topics including privacy, security, technology design and development, education, entrepreneurship, management, sales and marketing, and mobile application development. Lie was given his name as an honorarium for his three years of service (2005-2008) as a Peace Corps Volunteer in The Gambia, West Africa, where he designed, deployed, and taught the first two years of The Gambia's first Bachelor's in Computer Science program at the University of The Gambia (UTG). Today his program is still successful and sustainable. After returning from the Peace Corps, Lie recruited and managed a volunteer team to build and release the free WasteNot iOS app to help people world-wide share their good ideas for reducing environmental impact. He furthermore helped the United Nations as a technology consultant and researched and documented the privacy risks of health and fitness mobile apps.

**Christopher Whitaker, Project Management Consultant at the Smart Chicago Collaborative  
Chicago, IL**

Christopher Whitaker is a project management consultant at the Smart Chicago Collaborative, utilizing his experience in government and community organizing to advance civic innovation in Chicago. Whitaker also serves as the Chicago Brigade Captain for Code for America, supporting civic hacking events and teaching a weekly Civic Hacking 101 class. He is a graduate of DePaul University (MPA) and Sam Houston State University (BA, Political Science). Previously, Whitaker served with the US Army in Iraq as a mechanized infantryman.

**Jessica Klein, Co-Founder of Rockaway Help  
Brooklyn, NY**

Together with a group of journalists and residents, civic hacker and designer Jessica Klein co-founded “Rockaway Help” in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. Rockaway Help is committed to empowering the community to find solutions for emergency response, preparedness and rebuilding through hyperlocal open news and the development of innovative community-designed technologies. As part of the National Day of Civic Hacking, Jessica lead workshops and hackathons for designers, engineers and Rockaway Beach, New York residents to identify problems and prototype design or technology solutions in the devastated coastal community. Jessica is currently the Creative Lead of the Mozilla Open Badges project where she promotes openness and creativity in formal and informal learning environments and develops ways for learners to design their own unique narrative around their credentials. Jessica created the Hackasaurus project, the Web X-Ray Goggles and Thimble tools to help teens learn how to code through hacking. Over the last decade, she has worked at a variety of institutions dedicated to learning including the Museum of Arts & Design, The Ruben Museum of Art, The Institute of Play, Startl, The Hive and Sesame Workshop. She also founded OceanLab NYC, a project which asked parents, teachers and kids in the NYC community to investigate their urban coastal environment through casual interaction and play.

**Caitria O’Neill, Co-Founder of Recovers  
San Francisco, CA**

Caitria O’Neill is a co-founder of Recovers, a disaster preparedness and recovery technology company in San Francisco. After a tornado struck her hometown, Monson, MA in 2011, Caitria and her sister Morgan worked within their community to connect survivors with local skills and donations. This kind of seat-of-the-pants organizing happens in every neighborhood, after every storm. The Recovers team has turned the best practices of many efforts into a user-friendly tech toolkit for risk mitigation and community response. In less than two years they have helped hundreds of thousands of people find information, aid, and ways to pitch in. Caitria holds a BA in Government from Harvard University, FEMA NIMS/ICS certifications, and was named an Up-and-Coming CEO by Forbes Magazine. Her work has been featured by CNN Opinion, TED.com, and Bloomberg Businessweek.

**Steven Clift, Founder of E-Democracy  
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

Steven Clift is @democracy on Twitter. He launched E-Democracy.org in 1994 and it is the world’s first election information website. His “government by day, citizen by night” insights were built as leader of the State of Minnesota's first e-government initiative. He spoke across 30 countries for over a decade from Estonia to Libya to Mongolia on open government and civic participation to support non-partisan,

volunteer-powered efforts for inclusive online local democracy. An Ashoka Fellow, today he is E-Democracy's Executive Director. He leads a dedicated team with the BeNeighbors.org effort to connect all neighbors online (and off) in public life across race and ethnicity, generations, immigrant and native-born, and more. He lives with his lovely wife and two children in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**Gerrie Schipske, Councilwoman on the Long Beach City Council  
Long Beach City, CA**

Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske is currently serving her second term on the Long Beach City Council. She has championed open, transparent and accountable local government since she took office in 2006 by being the first elected official in Long Beach to disclose their calendar and to communicate daily via blog, email, Facebook and Twitter. In January 2012, she took public education and transparency efforts one step further with her "Open Up Long Beach" initiative and website which provide residents increased access to the city's every day affairs and documents, and includes opportunities for residents to "go behind the scenes" of city operations. These efforts were lauded in California Forward's report: The State of Transparency in California: 2013. Gerrie also brought transparency to the Medical Board of California on which she serves by initiating the requirement that members disclose each meeting any contacts they have had with interested parties. Gerrie earned her JD from Pacific Coast University School of Law, her MA from George Washington University, her BA from University of California, Irvine and her RNP from Harbor UCLA Women's Health Care Nurse Practitioner Program. She is the author of three books on the history of Long Beach, California.

**Brad Lander, New York City Council Member  
Brooklyn, NY**

Brad Lander is a New York City Council Member representing Brooklyn's 39th District, and a leader on issues of affordable housing, livable communities, the environment, and public education. Named one of "Today's Social Justice Heroes" by The Nation magazine, Lander is co-chair of the Council's Progressive Caucus and was one of the first councilmembers to bring "participatory budgeting" to his district, giving residents the power to decide which projects to support with their tax dollars. Prior to serving in the City Council, Brad directed the Pratt Center for Community Development and the Fifth Avenue Committee, a nationally-recognized community development organization.

**Robert Davis, Co-Founder of RadSocial  
Cooper City, FL**

Robert Davis is a recent marketing graduate from Nova Southeastern University in Davie, FL. His day job consists of managing a social media consultancy for small to medium sized businesses, and at night one can find him at the local maker and hacker spaces around Fort Lauderdale and Miami. Robert is a Code for America intern alumni ('12) and an avid supporter of creating civic tools with open data for the public good. Along with fellow Floridian Cristina Solana, the two created the Florida Bill Tracker, forked from the MinnPost and redeployed to easily track controversial Florida legislation. Robert is also an avid traveler and surfer, and hopes to inspire others to change their world regardless of age or expertise.

**Alderman Joe Moore, City of Chicago, 49th Ward  
Chicago, IL**

Known as a pioneer for political reform, governmental transparency and democratic governance, Joe Moore represents Chicago's 49th Ward, one of the nation's most economically and racially diverse communities. Moore became the first elected official to bring "participatory budgeting" to the United States. Each year, Moore turns over \$1 million of his discretionary capital budget to a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making in which his constituents decide through direct vote how to allocate his budget. Moore's participatory budgeting model has since been adopted by four of his Chicago City Council colleagues, as well as city council members in New York City, San Francisco, and Vallejo, California.

**Anita Brown-Graham, Director of the Institute for Emerging Issues at NC State  
University  
Raleigh, NC**

Anita Brown-Graham is Director of the Institute for Emerging Issues (IEI) at NC State University, a think-and-do tank focused on tackling big issues that affect North Carolina's future growth and prosperity. From energy, to fiscal modernization, to improving our systems of higher education, IEI takes the lead in convening state leaders in business, higher education and government to address these issues in a comprehensive, long-term way to prepare the state for future challenges and opportunities. In her role at IEI, Anita led the development of the Emerging Issues Commons, a first of its kind civic engagement tool – both a physical space and an online hub that stands to transform how citizens across the state connect with each other, access information, and take action in the decades to come. Prior to her leadership at IEI, Anita worked as faculty of the School of Government at UNC Chapel Hill for 13 years, training communities in strategic planning to revitalize their distressed rural communities. Her work inspired both rural and urban communities to work together for a better future for the state. Anita is a William C. Friday Fellow, American Marshall Fellow, and Eisenhower Fellow.

**Deborah Parker, Tulalip Tribes Vice Chair  
Tulalip, WA**

Deborah Parker Tsi-Cy-Altsa (Tulalip/Yaqui) was elected to the Tulalip Tribes Board of Directors in 2012. As Vice-Chairwoman, Deborah brings to Tulalip leadership nearly two decades of experience as a policy analyst, program developer, communications specialist, and committed cultural advocate and volunteer in the tribal and surrounding communities. Serving as a Legislative Policy Analyst in the Office of Governmental Affairs for the Tulalip Tribes from 2005-2012, Deborah engaged in the legislative process on behalf of the Tulalip Tribes by providing quality analysis of issues most pertinent to the exercise of sovereignty and tribal governance, with particular emphasis in the areas of education, finance, taxation, and healthcare. Before joining legislative affairs Deborah developed two unique outreach and education programs for the Tulalip Tribes. Young Mothers was a culturally relevant program for teen mothers, and the Tribal Tobacco Program sought to inspire responsible tobacco use among tribal members, while acknowledging tobacco's sacred place in Indigenous cultures. Prior to her work for the Tulalip Tribes Deborah served as Director of the Residential Healing School of the Tseil-Waututh Nation in Canada, and in the Treaty Taskforce Office of the Lummi Nation, where she was mentored by American Indian leaders such as Joe Delacruz, Billy Frank, Henry Cagey and Jewell James. As a passionate advocate for improved education for tribal members, and a belief in the inherent right of all Native Americans to expect and receive a quality education, one that is free from racial or cultural bias, Deborah is focused on educational reform, which includes developing curriculum that is a true reflection of an Indigenous ethics and knowledge system. Deborah remains committed to education by volunteering her time in the local schools where her children are enrolled. Deborah graduated from the University of Washington with a Bachelor of Arts degree in American Ethnic Studies and Sociology where she distinguished herself as a scholar and a young Indigenous leader. Deborah lives in Tulalip with her husband Myron Dewey (Paiute/Shoshone) and their five children.