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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA & AT&T Announce 2013 App Quest Winners

Top Apps Use Innovation and Real-Time Data to Improve Transit Guides, Connect Riders with Subway Artists & Aid Blind and Visually Impaired

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority and AT&T today announced the winners of the 2013 App Quest challenge, a global competition to develop new mobile tools that use real time MTA data to improve commutes for millions of subway, bus and rail riders. MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas F. Prendergast and Marissa Shorenstein, New York State President, AT&T announced the winners at an awards ceremony and app demonstration in Grand Central Terminal's Vanderbilt Hall, where they were joined by New York State Chief Data Officer Barbara Cohn, President of Polytechnic Institute of New York University Katepalli R. Sreenivasan, ChallengePost CEO Brandon Kessler, App Quest judges and design teams.

The winners include:

- **Grand Prize for Best Overall App (\$20,000):** [Citymapper](#), which uses real-time transit information to improve travel guides;
- **Second Prize for Best Overall App (\$10,000):** [Subculture.FM](#) for connecting riders with artists seen on the subway;
- **Third Prize for Best Overall App (\$5,000):** [Transit App](#) for using real time data to advise riders of train and bus locations, departure times and service changes;
- **The MTA Wish List App (\$2,000):** [Citymapper](#);
- **Honorable Mentions (\$1,000 each):** [Accessway](#), a tool for the blind and visually impaired to navigate the subway system; and to [Bus NYC](#), which provides live departure and arrival data for all bus routes; and
- **Popular Choice Award (\$1,000):** [Moovit](#), which received the most public votes for combining real-time MTA data with user-information riders can provide from their own experiences.

"The app developers who competed in this challenge have shown that they have the know-how, the enthusiasm, and the energy to do great things with the open data we and others provide," said Thomas F. Prendergast MTA Chairman and CEO. "And we are glad that so many in the tech community have put their efforts into helping the MTA, and, more importantly, our customers. That's why we are going to continue to expand the amount of open data we provide."

"As our network continues to expand underground, we are presented with a unique opportunity to improve the commuting experience for the millions of MTA customers who ride the subways, buses and rails each day," said Marissa Shorenstein, New York State President, AT&T. "AT&T is excited to be part of the innovation process that develops better tools utilizing mobile communication and benefits the greater public."

"MTA AT&T App Quest embraces the spirit of Governor Cuomo's landmark OpenNY – New York State's comprehensive Open Data portal," said Barbara Cohn, Chief Data Officer for the New York State Office of Information Technology Services. "Utilizing technology to enhance access to government data promotes greater government efficiency, improves performance, sparks innovation, and enhances citizen engagement."

"This challenge illustrates the importance of engineering to our everyday lives in the 21st century, as well as the power of partnerships between academia, government and the private sector," said Katepalli Sreenivasan, NYU-Poly President. "The spark that ignited the App Quest and the one-day hackathon in May arose from an NYU-Poly research and classroom project to make use of MTA data, and the support of AT&T helped make possible the tens of apps that will benefit the MTA's 8.5 million commuters. The students of our Integrated Digital Media program, like engineering students throughout New York, find excitement and experience through such real-world challenges, and NYU-Poly is pleased to play a role in the 2013 App Quest."

"App Quest continues to galvanize software developers, designers, and technologists around the world who look to improve transit by tapping into great data and APIs," said Brendan Kessler, CEO of ChallengePost. "We're excited by the growth of this competition from last year. In addition to rallying software makers from across the U.S., App Quest attracted entries from Australia, Israel, Singapore, and the U.K."

The apps were developed as part of the 2013 App Quest virtual challenge that launched in May with a weekend hackathon – the first to be officially sponsored by the MTA. Developers had the opportunity to continue working on their apps through the final deadline in August. App Quest received 49 total submissions.

In the last year, AT&T has helped lead the activation of wireless service in underground subway stations, and the MTA's Transit Wireless program has connected 36 stations in Manhattan to free public WiFi. The MTA has announced it will expand Transit Wireless to the next 40 stations, in Queens and Manhattan, by the first quarter of 2014.

The panel that selected the winning apps included digital, transit and tech experts from across the City, including:

- **Matt Brimer**, General Assembly Co-Founder
- **Barbara Cohn**, Chief Data Officer, New York State Office of Information Technology Services

- **Rachel Haot**, Chief Digital Officer, City of New York
- **Todd Haselton**, Executive Director of Mobile, TechnoBuffalo
- **Brian Malkerson**, Principle, NYC Seed
- **Andrew Rasiej**, NY Tech Meetup Chairman
- **Marissa Shorenstein**, President of AT&T New York
- **Sree Sreenivasan**, Chief Digital Officer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
- **Craig Stewart**, Senior Director of Capital Programs, MTA

More information about the winning apps:

- **Citymapper** is reinventing the transport app with the simple mission of making the large complicated city simple and usable by providing A to B journey planning with real-time information on subways, buses and bikes across all five boroughs. The app also provides information on disruptions, alert you when to get off the bus, give you hyperlocal weather and personalize the app with your most visited places.
- **SubCulture.FM** allows MTA users to identify their favorite subway musicians performing in the NYC Subway area by providing bar codes – known as QR codes – to each musical group to display during live performances. These QR codes can be stored, so that you can enjoy their music anytime.
- **Transit App** makes everyday commuting in NYC simple by instantly telling users about transit routes around you and departure times. See in real time the current locations of desired trains or buses and use the trip planner to route your next destination.
- **AccessWay** is a way-finding app that assists the blind and visually impaired with navigating the MTA Subway system. AccessWay incorporates both Bluetooth LowEnergy Smart Sensor and Wi-Fi technologies to talk to a user's device and deliver audio messages regarding their surroundings – such as which platform the user is on. The app also provides real-time train arrival times and service changes.
- **Bus NYC** is the most comprehensive bus app in New York City, providing users with live departure and arrival times, full timetables for selected routes, service advisories, bus route maps and trip planners among others. Many of Bus NYC's features also function without Wi-Fi, allowing users to plan while they are underground.
- **Moovit** takes the hassle out of using public transportation with MTA schedules, real-time next arrival, info planning and navigation. Users have the ability to contribute to the data by sharing their MTA experiences.

About the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is North America's largest public transportation network, serving a population of 14.9 million people in the 5,000-square-mile area fanning out from New York City through Long Island, the Hudson Valley, and southwestern Connecticut. MTA subways, buses, and railroads provide 2.63 billion trips each year to New Yorkers – the equivalent of about one in every three users of mass transit in the United States and two-thirds of the nation's rail riders.

About Polytechnic Institute of New York University

The Polytechnic Institute of New York University (formerly the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute and the Polytechnic University, now widely known as NYU-Poly) is an affiliated institute of New York University, soon to be its School of Engineering. NYU-Poly, founded in 1854, is the nation's second-oldest private engineering school. It is presently a comprehensive school of education and research in engineering and applied sciences, rooted in a 159-year tradition of invention, innovation and entrepreneurship. It remains on the cutting edge of technology, innovatively extending the benefits of science, engineering, management and liberal studies to critical real-world opportunities and challenges, especially those linked to urban systems, health and wellness, and the global information economy. In addition to its programs on the main campus in New York City at MetroTech Center in downtown Brooklyn, it offers programs around the globe remotely through NYUe-Poly. NYU-Poly is closely connected to engineering in NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai and to the NYU Center for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP) also at MetroTech, while operating two incubators in downtown Manhattan and Brooklyn. For more information, visit <http://www.poly.edu>.

About ChallengePost

ChallengePost brings software makers and organizations together for online challenges and in-person hackathons that build awareness, solve problems, and spur innovation. For more information, visit <http://challengepost.com>.