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Cc:
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News, updates, and announcements from Code for Asheville

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The Year Ahead at Code for Asheville

We had a pretty [amazing year in 2017](#) - we showed up and we mattered, and that is something to celebrate.

We will do no less in 2018. Our hope, though, is to do much more by making it much easier for you both to contribute to the work and to participate in the community.

One change that we hope will make Code for Asheville more welcoming to less experienced coders is to designate one Community Night every quarter to learning and portfolio development. We'll try to keep it interesting for all levels, but our commitment is to make sure those with less experience are particularly able to benefit. Our first event will be April 12, when we'll demonstrate how to use City of Asheville data through REST and GraphQL APIs to build apps and dashboards. We'll have starter projects that make use of both so you can stand up a working application right away.

Also at least once a quarter we will devote a meeting to making progress on some common project. At these events there will always be opportunities for both technical and non-technical folks. Our first event will be next month, when we will completely revamp the Code for Asheville website. It has suffered an ongoing identity crisis (who

am I for?!) for a couple years now and it's time to give it some real love. We'll need some Wordpress and design and web development folks, but we also especially need people who don't know a lot about Code for Asheville, Code for America, civic tech, or coding (since that's largely who the website is for).

The third event in the quarterly rotation will vary from member project showcases to outside speakers to [...insert your own answer here]. We'd love to hear your suggestions. In the meantime, we expect that the March meeting will be a project showcase - stay tuned for more.

We will continue our focus on social justice issues, working with community groups, local governments and other brigades on issues ranging from criminal justice to homelessness to equalizing economic and educational opportunity. One area we hope to expand is our collaboration with community groups on the use of data to better understand issues and work for positive change.

Finally, we are committed to making it easier for you to contribute.

We will be helping project leaders break big projects into manageable, documented bits of work that you can do in a few hours on your own. We'll help them prepare for group work sessions at a Community Night or dedicated project hackathon that let you show up and have fun while making a difference.

There are also opportunities to help in small, ongoing ways. Can you pick up pizza for community nights? Take information from the newsletter and promote it on Facebook? Poll project leads to get updates? Help plan community nights and other events? Write a brief newsletter article on a project or our latest gathering? There are lots of ways to get involved at every level of commitment.

We will be reaching out shortly with a survey to learn more about your interests and about ways we can help you plug in - please do respond and let us know.

Looking forward to working with all of you in 2018 to make our community better!

News From the Network

Code for America Vision, Mission, Values & Operating Principles

Code for America staff, Brigades, and a few dozen others worked together over the last months of 2017 to rewrite the organization's [vision, mission, values, and operating principles](#). The participatory process behind these ideas sparked many valuable conversations about the past, present, and future of our movement. Read ["Writing our principles and values, together, Part 1"](#) and [Part 2](#) to learn more about the participatory process. And the conversation will continue. If you would like to give feedback please comment on the [Github repository](#) or reach out to your local [Brigade leader](#).

Volunteers Needed for the Last Blue Ribbon Committee Public Engagement Session 1/24

Last June, the Asheville City Council created a Blue Ribbon Committee to advise on the creation of a new advisory commission focused on human relations within the city. Since then the Committee has worked to develop recommendations on the commission's mission, scope, and duties.

The first of two public input sessions on the draft recommendations was held on Jan. 10. About 50 members of the Asheville community showed up to participate - check out the video of the event [here](#).

The next session will be held on [January 24](#). The City's Equity and Inclusion Manager, Kimberlee Archie, has asked Code for Asheville to help recruit volunteer note-takers

for these sessions. **We need at least 6 more for the 1/24 session** (the City will provide the computers). [This presentation](#) will give you an idea of how the evening is organized.

If you can help with this important conversation, please contact [Lauren Showfety](#). You may also [RSVP to attend the event](#).

Upcoming events

1/23 Brigade Planning Meeting

Our next regular planning meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 23 at 5:30pm at the Battery Park Book Exchange. RSVP [here](#) or just stop by.

2/8 Monthly Community Meetup

Our next Community Night will be on Thursday, February 8, 2018 at 5:30pm, at the Stephens-Lee Recreation Center. We'll be doing a complete revamp of the Code for Asheville website. We need people who know a lot about Code for Asheville and people who know every little, coders and designers and just plain folks! RSVP on [meetup](#) or just show up.

Community nights occur on the second Thursday of each month at Stephens-Lee Recreation Center.

2018 Code for America Summit

Registration is now open for the seventh annual [Code for America Summit](#)! This Summit will bring together more than 1,200 public servants, civic-minded technologists, entrepreneurs and technology companies to share what's working and what's not when it comes to government getting the full benefit of technology for better services, better outcomes and better value for money. This year's event will take place May 30th - June 1st in Oakland, CA.

Code for Asheville gets 2 free tickets to the event - is one of them for you? Contact [Eric Jackson](#) if you are even a little bit interested.

Have a Story to Share?

We'd love to have your contribution. You can write something up about a Code for Asheville event or share something else going on in the civic tech world. Email us at code4asheville@gmail.com.

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