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**U.S. Chief Technology Officer Delivers First Lady's Message
to Nation's Top Game Developers**

\$40,000 Prize Enlists Leading Talent in Fight to End Childhood Obesity

U.S. Chief Technology Officer Aneesh Chopra addressed the 10th Annual Game Developers Choice Awards by video this evening to deliver a letter from First Lady Michelle Obama to the 17,000 attendees of the Game Developers Conference 2010, being held in San Francisco.

Chopra congratulated attendees—some of the Nation's most creative developers of digital games—and delivered a personal greeting from the First Lady, who yesterday announced the launch of the *Apps for Healthy Kids* challenge. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and adopted by the First Lady as part of her *Let's Move!* campaign to fight childhood obesity, the challenge calls upon talented, kid-savvy innovators across the country to incorporate recently released Federal nutrition data into digital games and tools that can inspire and empower children and their parents to get active and eat healthy.

"It is our hope, through the *Apps For Healthy Kids* competition, that you will take full advantage of that information and build it into new games on-line, new programs that are built within the games you've already established, and to have those of you in the audience today participate in new and creative ways to help advance this national priority," Chopra says in his video address.

The First Lady's letter notes that childhood obesity rates in America have tripled over the past three decades and nearly one in three American children is overweight or obese today. "These statistics are even more breathtaking when you think about how the issue impacts our children's health, and what it means for their future," the First Lady writes in the letter. "You know better than most the power of games to deeply engage our nation's youth. Today I'm asking you to dedicate your creative energy and skills to address one of America's biggest challenges and help make healthy living fun, exciting, and relevant for kids."

The full letter will be posted on the [Game Developers Conference](#) Website this evening, as Chopra delivers his address, as well as on OSTP's [blog site](#).

The *Apps for Healthy Kids* competition is the latest example of the Obama Administration's interest in using prizes and challenges to inspire creative Americans and institutions to come up

with innovative solutions to pressing National problems. In the President's *Strategy for American Innovation*, released last September, he called upon agencies to promote and harness innovation by using tools such as prizes and challenges. On Monday, March 8th, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provided [guidance](#) for agencies to increase their use of prizes and challenges and called for the formation of a government-wide community of individuals and agencies committed to this approach, to be led by OMB and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).

"Well-designed prizes and challenges have a number of benefits," said Thomas Kalil, OSTP's Deputy Director for Policy and author of a 2006 study on prizes. "They stimulate private sector investment that is many times greater than the cash value of the prize and allow the government to pay only for results. They also dramatically expand the pool of talent focused on addressing key national problems, capture the public's imagination, and can change the public's perception of what is possible. That's why the Obama Administration is encouraging agencies to embrace prizes and challenges as powerful tools for fostering innovation."

The *Apps for Healthy Kids* challenge is a collaborative initiative of the Office of Science and Technology Policy and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services and the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. The competition seeks to leverage the recently-released MyPyramid 1,000 food database to create web or mobile-based apps in two categories.

The first set of prizes will be awarded for digital games that best engage and motivate kids to eat healthy and be physically active. The second set of prizes will be awarded for tools for parents striving to make the right choices for their kids—so when they are planning meals, at the grocery store, or picking up dinner on the way home from work they can instantly access easy-to-understand nutritional information they can trust.

Contestants will compete for \$40,000 in cash prizes and the chance to shine before USDA's all-star panel of judges, including Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple, Inc.; Mark Pincus, CEO of Zynga Game Network, Inc.; Michael Levine, Executive Director of the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop; Mike Gallagher, President and CEO of the Entertainment Software Association. Winners will be honored at a White House event in Washington, D.C.

For more information on the First Lady's Let's Move! initiative visit www.LetsMove.gov.

For more information about the Apps for Healthy Kids competition please visit www.AppsForHealthyKids.com .

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