

# Using Digital Technology to Promote Healthy Food Access

August 6, 2015 2:00 pm Eastern

Alyse Sabina, Aetna Foundation

Andrea Parker, Northeastern University

Adrienne Markworth, Leah's Pantry

Ken Cook, Environmental Working Group

*Grantmakers In Health with Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders*

# Using Digital Technology to Promote Healthy Food Access

Grantmakers in Health  
August 6, 2015

Alyse B. Sabina, MPH  
National Program Director  
Aetna Foundation, Inc.



## Our Mission

To promote wellness, health, and access to high-quality health care for everyone, while supporting the communities we serve.

## Our Pillars



UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY TO ADVANCE INNOVATIONS AND PROMOTE HEALTHY CHOICES



INCREASING ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES



HEALTH EQUITY: BRIDGING THE HEALTH DIVIDE

# Digital Health Initiative

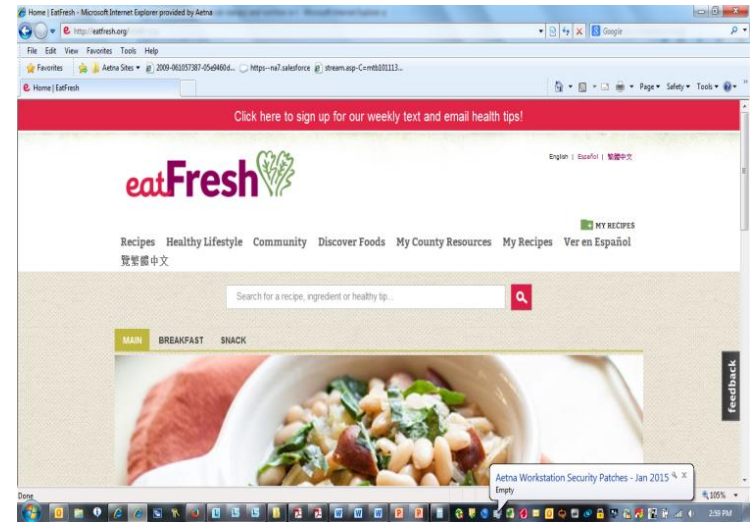
*To identify existing innovative approaches that improve health outcomes and scale them to have transformative impact*

## Expected Outcomes

- ❖ Strengthen evidence base of digital health strategies that promote healthful choices at the community level, specifically within minority and underserved communities
  - ❖ Demonstrate impact and scalability of effective digital health strategies to improve community health outcomes and that have the potential for positive societal impact
  - ❖ Promote and empower people and communities to take ownership of their health
  - ❖ Showcase scalable innovative community solutions that can have a positive impact on vulnerable populations
-

# Supporting Healthy Eating Through Innovation

- Advancing technological innovations to ensure affordable access to locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables
- Empowering communities to make healthful choices
- Strengthening local economies



# Thank You

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# Using Digital Innovation to Achieve Health Equity

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# Outline

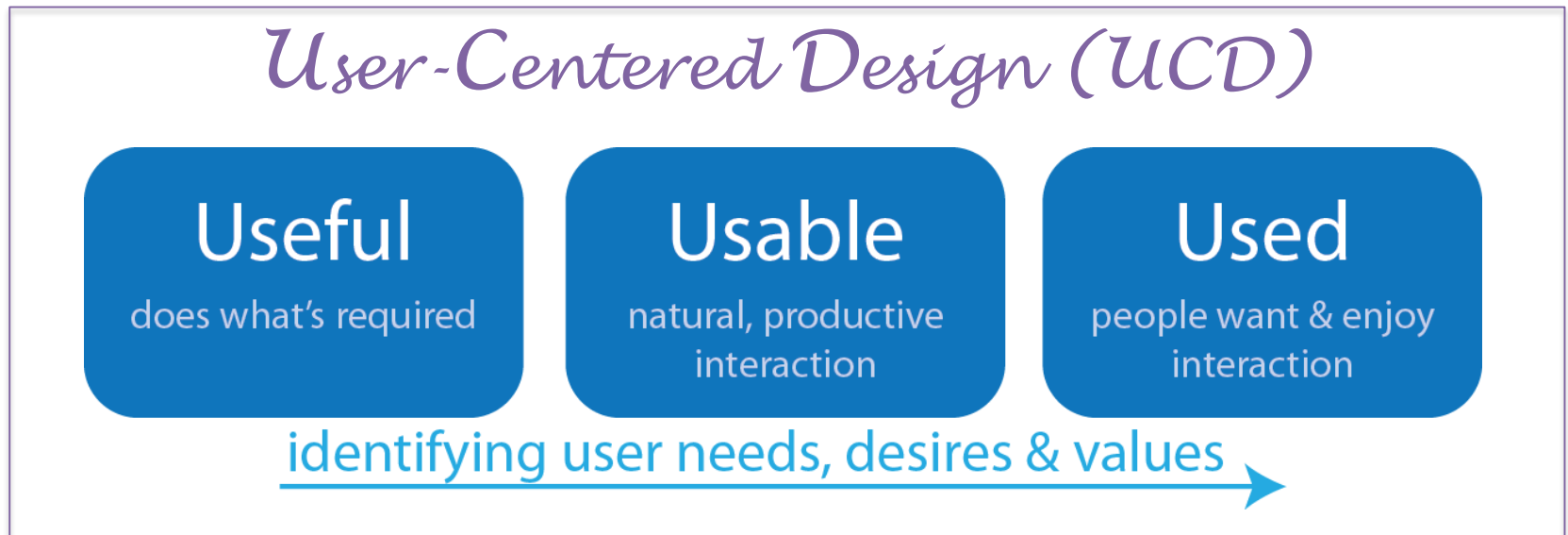
- . Digital Innovation: Capacity Building Opportunities
  - .. User-Centered Design (UCD) & SDOH
    - .... 3 Points: Systematic Review & National Evaluation
      - ..... Summary

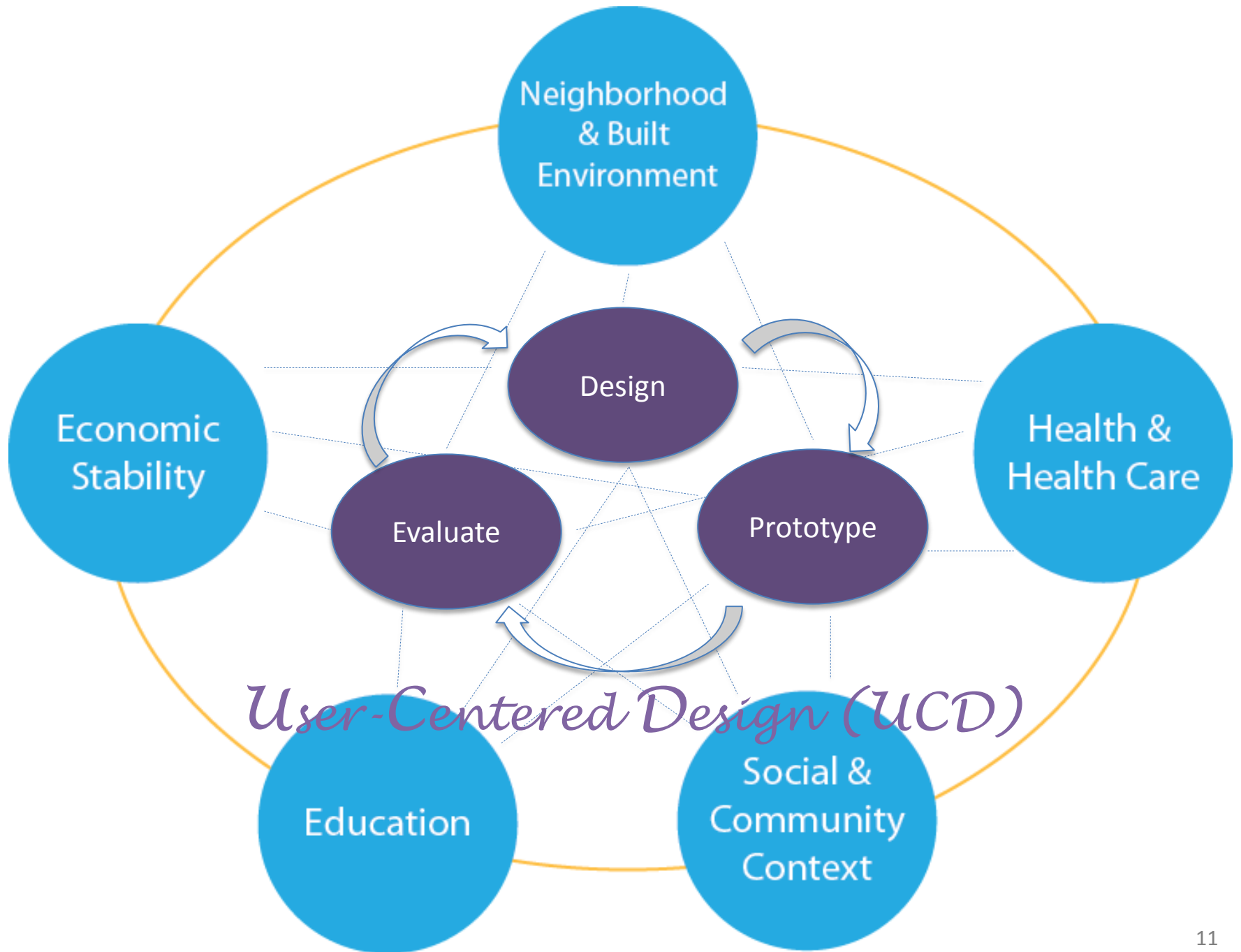




# Digital Innovation

- Impacting: behaviors, knowledge, attitudes...
  - What else?





**3 POINTS:  
SYSTEMATIC REVIEW & NATIONAL EVALUATION**

# Systematic Review

- How are mHealth tools being designed to address health disparities? How effective are they?
- 11 Databases
  - (e.g., ACM Digital Library, IEEExplore, Science Direct, PubMed, CINAHL, MEDLINE, PsycInfo)
- Final corpus = 77 Papers
  - Infant wellness, diabetes self-management, weight loss, heart disease, obesity prevention, etc.

# National Evaluation

- 17 Projects
  - Digital Approaches to Addressing Health Disparities
    - Many focused on nutrition
  - Knowledge, attitude, behavioral & organizational impacts
    - Increased FV consumption, understanding of how to choose healthy foods, etc.

Advocacy  
Support

Informational  
Tools

Games &  
Gamification

Goal Setting &  
Tracking

Modeling &  
Social  
Connectedness

Clinical

# (1) The Community is Critical

## Systematic Review

- Community organizations
  - Very involved w/ recruitment
- But, limited involvement in delivery
- Real-world interactions help to facilitate efficacy
  - Enabling delivery
    - “There is a readiness among African American men to accept interventions that are **vetted by their community leaders and carried out within familiar community settings.**” Sultan et al. 2014
  - Strengthening community ties
    - “Remote nurses ... helped build participants’ **social connection** with the program, which **the text messages then reinforced and strengthened.**” Nundy et al. 2014

# (1) The Community is Critical

## AF Evaluation

Schools & Child  
Care Centers

Churches

Community  
Centers

Clinics

Farmers'  
Markets

- “Some seniors were less than capable [of text messaging] but because they trust the messenger (Pastors and Health Ministers), they were willing to try.” (Text4Wellness)
- “The text messages were effective both because they provided timely information but also because they strengthened the relationship of the health ministers with the participants.” (MOBIL-ize)
- Developed “supportive relationships with adult Y staff members.” (Y-MVP)



## (2) Technology: Grounding & Scope

Preliminary findings

- Opportunities for expanding design space
  - Beyond text messaging & information delivery



- Better theoretical foundation (present in 47% of papers)

# (3) Enriching the methodological toolkit

## Preliminary findings

- Systematic Review
  - Most reported formative work (57%)
- AF Evaluation
  - surveys, interviews, focus groups
  - *“Many times folks do not know specifically what they might want to accomplish, they do not know what the possibilities are.”*
- Need for greater use of user-centered design methods
  - Participatory design
  - Cultural & technology probes
  - Experience sampling method



# Summary: The Opportunity

- Design & evaluation within a SDOH, ecological frame
  - UCD methods
- Technology design: grounding & scope
  - Theory
    - Health behavior, sociotechnical
  - Beyond SMS
  - Personalization
- Integration: health technology + community organizations

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# Funding Health Equity Technology Projects

Adrienne Markworth

Executive Director

Leah's Pantry





- Cooking and nutrition workshops
- Staff training and development
- Online interventions (Eatfresh.org)
- Community-based recipe development
- Trauma-informed programming
- San Diego Food Systems Alliance – fiscal sponsorship

[www.leahspantrysf.org](http://www.leahspantrysf.org)



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### Recipe of the Month



**Grilled Chicken...**

142

0



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**Recipe of the Month**



feedback



- Anchor product – [www.eatfresh.org](http://www.eatfresh.org)
- Eatfresh.org Text-Based Nutrition Ed
- Eatfresh.org Mini-Course – public launch  
10/1/15

it's not what  
the software does.  
it's what the  
user does.

@hugh







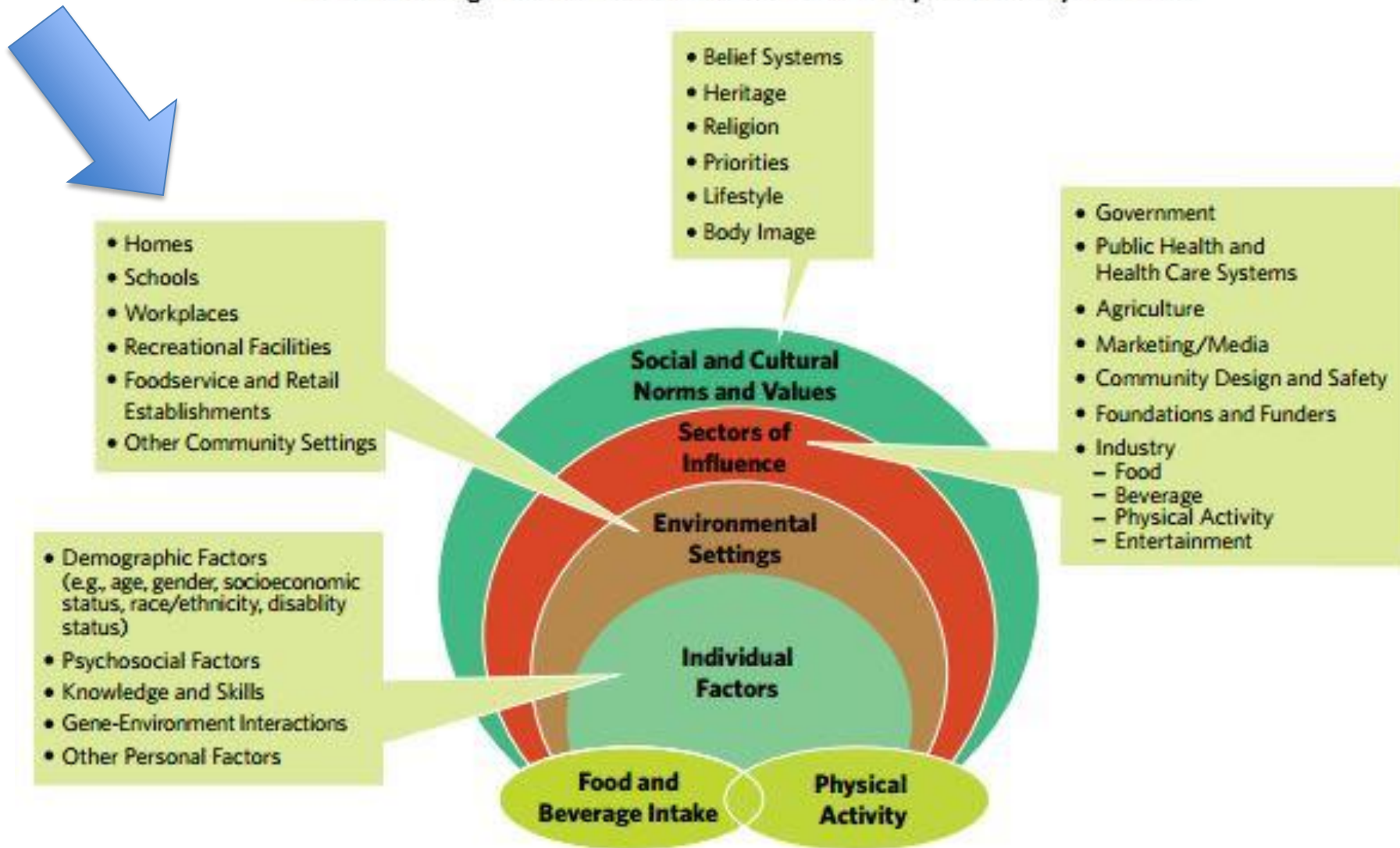


**LOS SES**

# After the build...

- Just because it's a good product doesn't mean anyone is going to use it.
- How can the product plug into an existing system?
- Hackathons, sigh

## A Social Ecological Framework for Nutrition and Physical Activity Decisions





**California Department of Public Health  
Network for a Healthy California  
2010-2011 Project Directory**

The map shows the following project regions:

- North Coast
- Bay Area
- Central Coast
- South Coast
- Sacramento
- San Francisco Bay Area
- Central Valley
- Sacramento Valley
- South Valley
- San Diego and Imperial

Logos for **FEEDING AMERICA** and **CDPH Public Health** are visible at the bottom.

**It's hard to learn  
when you're hungry.**

**17 million  
children live in  
food insecure  
households**

**FEEDING  
AMERICA**

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# snappfresh

Enter your address and zip code or cross streets and city to find stores nearby which accept SNAP cards

e.g. 48104, 85 2nd St, San Francisco or Mission and 16th, 94106

Submit

or, text message your address to:

**(415) 889-8650**

Espanol

Chinese

English

# Competition vs. Collaboration

Listen for “I am successful because everyone around me is doing a great job, and I know how to leverage this work with technology” instead of “we can solve this problem with this great app.”



Adrienne Markworth

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- More webinars on this topic?
- New topics you want to tackle or learn more about?
- Innovative work that you want to share?
- A question you want to pose to your colleagues?

Contact us at [heal@gih.org](mailto:heal@gih.org)