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## Pop!Tech Launches “Big Bet” Social Innovation Fellows Program

### *World-Class Faculty to Provide Visionary Social Innovators with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tools and Training, Help Take Potentially Transformative Programs to Scale*

**Camden, ME & New York, NY – September 16, 2008** – Pop!Tech ([www.poptech.org](http://www.poptech.org)), the renowned annual ideas summit and social innovation network, today unveiled the 2008 Pop!Tech Social Innovation Fellows: a corps of high-potential change agents incubating breakthrough – or “big bet” – approaches to the world’s most pressing social, economic and environmental challenges.

Each Fellow is working on a transformative solution to a critical global challenge, in categories such as sustainable energy, human rights, education, economic development, healthcare and civic engagement. Pop!Tech will accelerate the positive impact of their projects by connecting Fellows with world-class thought leaders and a 21<sup>st</sup> century toolkit – including the latest tools and thinking in emerging technology, design, communications, branding, funding and scalability.

The program’s faculty will lead the Fellows through an intensive four-day “boot camp” just prior to the start of “Pop!Tech 2008: Scarcity and Abundance” (October 22 – 25, 2008, Camden, ME). Each Fellow will then be showcased at the acclaimed thought leadership gathering, kicking off a year of access to mentors, influencers and resources.

The 2008 Pop!Tech Fellows program will be led by iconoclastic social innovators and acknowledged category leaders, including **Paul Polak** (helped lift 17MM people out of poverty worldwide), **Bunker Roy** (Barefoot College), **Clara Miller** (CEO, Nonprofit Finance Fund), **Ethan Zuckerman** (co-founder, Global Voices), **John Balen** (General Partner, Canaan Partners), **Robert Fabricant** (Executive Creative Director, frog design), **Gideon D’Arcangelo** (Director of Creative Strategy, ESI Design), **Jim Koch** (Director, Global Social Benefit Incubator at Santa Clara University), **Lisa Witter** and **Josh Baran** (COO and SVP, Fenton Communications), **Cheryl Heller** (CEO, Heller Communication Design; Pop!Tech board) and many others.

“Every Pop!Tech Social Innovation Fellow has the potential to effect dramatic and systemic positive change – yet each require particular skills or resources to take their project to scale,” said Andrew Zolli, curator and executive director of the Pop!Tech Institute. “This program is purpose built to close that gap.”

Pop!Tech received more than 100 submissions from over 30 countries for its inaugural Social Innovation Fellows program. The following individuals were selected to participate, all expenses paid:

*Name – project – place of origin / residence*

#### **Chip Ransler & Manoj Sinha – Husk Power Systems (HPS) – Charlottesville, VA & Bihar, India**

Chip and Manoj are key principals behind HPS, a for-profit company that’s created a proprietary technology to cost-effectively convert rice husks into electricity. The organization utilizes this technology in the production and operation of 35-100 kW mini power plants that deliver pay-for-use electricity to un-electrified villages in India’s “Rice Belt.” HPS pilot projects have become operationally profitable within six months, while delivering sustainable, environmentally-friendly, low-cost energy that is dramatically improving the lives of rural Indians.

### **Ory Okolloh – Ushahidi – Kenya / South Africa**

Ory is a lawyer, activist and blogger ([www.kenyanpundit.com](http://www.kenyanpundit.com)). She is also the co-founder and Executive Director of Ushahidi, a free, open source, Web / mobile-based platform capable of crowd-sourcing, sharing and mapping crisis information in near real time. Ushahidi applications are designed to facilitate more effective humanitarian crisis response – helping to save lives and speed up recovery efforts. The project was born as a way to track the atrocities and human rights violations that erupted after this year's Kenyan presidential election.

### **Erik Hersman – Ushahidi, Afrigadget.com and others – Orlando, FL / Kenya**

Erik is an innovator and technologist focused on advancing the use of technology as an empowerment tool in the developing world. He is a co-founder of Ushahidi and has also established [afrigadget.com](http://afrigadget.com) and [whiteafrican.com](http://whiteafrican.com) as key online communities promoting creative solutions to human rights, entrepreneurship and development challenges across Africa.

### **Melanie Edwards – Mobile Metrix – San Francisco, CA / Brazil**

A veteran of J.P. Morgan, IDG and the United Nations IT Service, Melanie launched Mobile Metrix to identify and serve the world's one billion "invisible" people. The market research and distribution company connects those at the base of the pyramid to critical products and services – including pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, voting registration and job training. Mobile Metrix accomplishes this by hiring, training and equipping local youth – in Brazil and other developing nations – with hand-held mobile technology that's used to gather demographic data, door-to-door. The company also develops, administers and analyzes surveys for corporations, governments, NGOs, foundations and local communities.

### **Nam Mokwunye – ICE Campus – Nigeria**

Nam is founder of ICE Campus, a private-public partnership to provide affordable broadband services to students first in Nigeria, then across sub-Saharan Africa. The project's goal is to introduce new distance learning opportunities via a mobile-enabled, social networking infrastructure. If ICE Campus succeeds in Nigeria, it will have a transformative impact on the country's educational system, which rejects 80% of college applicants each year due to lack of classroom space. ICE Campus was incubated in the Stanford University Digital Vision Program and counts Ashoka West Africa, Cisco Systems, ArteDigital, and the National IT Development Agency (NITDA) of Nigeria as strategic partners.

### **Heather Fleming – Catapult Design / Engineers Without Borders – Menlo Park, CA**

Heather Fleming is the founder of Catapult Design, a division of Engineers Without Borders-USA. Catapult helps foundations and non-profits apply design thinking to global development; EWB-USA partners with developing world communities in more than 40 countries to tackle critical humanitarian challenges. Under Fleming's leadership, EWB-USA is designing a low-cost wind turbine capable of generating enough electricity to charge a cell phone or power LED lighting in Guatemala, where 75 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. EWB-USA also contributed to the Darfur Stove Project, improving the design and usability of an innovative cookstove that requires less firewood, reducing the need for thousands of Darfuri women to leave refugee camps and risk exposure to violence.

### **Kushal Chakrabarti – Vittana Foundation – Kirkland, WA**

Vittana Foundation underwrites need-based scholarships and loans for high-achieving students in the developing world – eliminating barriers to education and providing a path to meaningful, productive employment. Vittana builds on the success of microlending ventures like Kiva.org, delivering rich, Web-based, person-to-person microfinance in partnership with an international network of MFI and educational institutions. The organization addresses the waste of our greatest natural resource – human capital – and is already working with students in India, with plans to extend further into South Asia and Latin America soon.

### **Priti Radhakrishnan – Initiative for Medicines, Access & Knowledge (I-MAK) – Lewes, DE**

Priti is Co-Director of I-MAK, a team of lawyers and scientists working to strengthen patent systems and encourage innovation in new medicines, while expanding broad access to the best and latest treatments.

The organization does this by reviewing pharmaceutical patents to strengthen patent examination, and selectively exposing unmerited pharmaceutical patents – which drive up the cost of essential drugs and prevent them from ever being accessible to poor patients in less developed countries. I-MAK's team is working to create technical analyses of 100 critical medicines and patents, which will help them preempt the granting of unmerited patents, increase accountability and ultimately make lifesaving drugs more affordable.

#### **Tshewang Dendup – Bhutan Broadcasting Service – Bhutan**

Bhutan's recent transition from an absolute monarchy to democracy has created unfathomable new choices and opportunities for the Bhutanese – and exposed the daunting challenges that lie ahead for the world's youngest democracy. Tshewang plans to help his compatriots seize this historic moment by providing them with hands-on training in business and computer skills, journalism/filmmaking and hospitality. His self-sustaining training center aims to empower the country's emerging leaders to drive Bhutan's economic success and standing in the modern world.

#### **Eric Dawson – Peace Games – Boston, MA**

Eric launched Peace Games in the early 90s to address sky-rocketing youth homicide rates. The non-profit has already reached 40,000 children and families in five states and is focused on changing school cultures – teaching students the conflict resolution and peacemaking skills critical to create a safe learning environment. Through Peace Games, students, teachers and volunteers come together to initiate service projects that reclaim gang-tagged buildings, build community gardens, launch recycling programs and tear down the walls of violence, sexism and racism.

#### **Ken Banks – kiwanja.net – United Kingdom**

Ken is the founder of kiwanja.net, an organization pioneering new applications of mobile technology to effect positive social and environmental change in the developing world. kiwanja.net helps local and international non-profits put mobiles to work through innovative offerings like FrontlineSMS – free software enabling coordinated, many-to-many, two-way text messaging. Ken's solutions have been used to improve communications in many critical situations, including human rights and election monitoring, as well as disaster relief coordination.

#### **Tevis Howard – KOMAZA – Los Altos Hills, CA / Kenya**

Tevis founded KOMAZA, a profitable microforestry social enterprise, to help end extreme poverty for rural Kenyan families living in arid landscapes. KOMAZA partners with poor families to plant high-profit commercial tree farms: families provide underutilized land and labor, KOMAZA provides planting inputs on credit, technical training, and tree marketing. With this microforestry partnership, KOMAZA is generating life-changing income for poor families and preserving indigenous biodiversity.

#### **Abby Falik – Global Citizen Year (GCY) – San Francisco, CA**

Abby is the founder and CEO of GCY, which aims to institutionalize a global service “gap year” for young Americans between high school and college – fundamentally transforming how they understand and act on their responsibilities as global citizens. In partnership with universities and NGOs, GCY will train, support, and engage a diverse nationwide corps before, during and after their service term. The program's ultimate goal is to create a pipeline of leaders prepared to combat global poverty and injustice throughout their lives.

#### **N. Taylor Thompson & Nathan Sigworth – PharmaSecure – Lebanon, NH**

Taylor and Nathan are co-founders of PharmaSecure, a for-profit start up with a breakthrough solution to the \$50+ billion, global pharmaceutical counterfeiting racket – which kills millions each year. PharmaSecure will soon launch a cell phone-based authentication mechanism enabling healthcare professionals and consumers to easily confirm the validity of purchased drugs. Their work is focused on the 5 billion people living in low and middle-income countries who are particularly susceptible to fake or sub-standard pharmaceuticals.

“We are thrilled to be the exclusive VC partner of the Pop!Tech Fellows program,” said John Balen, General Partner at Canaan Partners. “The Fellows selected this year bring truly revolutionary approaches

to innovation; our mission is to provide them with the transformational tools, real-world insights and operational guidance required to turn their ideas into valuable and important companies.”

“The Pop!Tech Social Innovation Fellows have demonstrated extraordinary imagination and resourcefulness, developing unique approaches to solving global problems,” said Robert Fabricant, executive creative director for frog design. “We are thrilled to have the opportunity to introduce them to a new set of design tools and methods that will help them continue to break new ground, tap into unorthodox ways of thinking and have an even bigger impact on the world around them.”

The Fellows’ training will take place just prior to “Pop!Tech 2008: Scarcity and Abundance,” convening October 22 – 25 in the seaside village of Camden, Maine. This year’s event will chart the core scarcities humans and organizations will encounter this century – and how a wealth of new innovations, bottom-up approaches to collaboration and insights into collective wisdom might hold the keys to addressing the challenges that lie ahead. Now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, the Pop!Tech conference is a remarkable gathering of more than 600 thought leaders, influencers and social change agents – from the worlds of science, technology, business, social innovation, the arts, philanthropy and more – that each fall explores the new ideas, technologies and forces of change shaping our future.

For those who can’t make it to Camden to experience Pop!Tech in person, Yahoo! will once again live stream the event in its entirety, free of charge, from October 23 – 25. At-home viewers will also have the opportunity to submit questions to presenters and participants in real time via [questions@poptech.org](mailto:questions@poptech.org).

### **About Pop!Tech**

Pop!Tech is a renowned ideas summit and social innovation network dedicated to accelerating the positive impact of world-changing people and ideas. The organization is known for its visionary Pop!Tech conferences, engaging media productions, and the innovative social change programs that it fosters worldwide. Please visit [www.poptech.org](http://www.poptech.org) for more.

### **About Canaan Partners**

Canaan Partners invests in visionary entrepreneurs and provides them the networks, insights and operational guidance required to build high-performance technology and healthcare companies. For 20 years, we have taken an active and committed role in the companies in which we invest, and have completed more than 70 mergers and acquisitions and 52 IPOs. With \$3 billion under management and a worldwide footprint, the firm is committed to catalyzing the growth of next-generation digital media, mobile and enterprise companies as well as the development of healthcare companies that are revolutionizing the practice of medicine.

Among our successes are DoubleClick, the leading online advertising solution; CommerceOne, the company that pioneered B2B ecommerce; SuccessFactors, the global leader in on-demand performance and talent management solutions; Match.com, the most popular online dating site in the world; Cerexa, one of the largest biotech acquisitions of 2007; AdvancedBioHealing, the leader in regenerative medicine; and Dexcom Inc., the largest diagnostic IPO of 2005. Other Canaan investments include Active Networks, Blurb, Dexterra, Tremor Media, Bharatmatrimony, Groundworks, Chimerix, Inc., ReVision Optics, Inc., and Transoma Medical. Canaan has offices in California, Connecticut, India and Israel. For more information visit [www.canaan.com](http://www.canaan.com).

### **About frog design, inc.**

frog design is a global innovation firm. We work with the world’s leading companies, helping them create and bring to market meaningful products, services, and experiences. Our cross-disciplinary process reveals valuable consumer and market insights and inspires lasting, humanizing solutions.

With a team of more than 400 designers, technologists, strategists, and analysts, we deliver fully convergent experiences that span multiple technologies, platforms, and media. We work across a broad spectrum of industries, including consumer electronics, telecommunications, healthcare, media, education, finance, retail, and fashion. Our clients include Alltel, Disney, GE, HP, Logitech, Microsoft, MTV, Seagate, Yahoo! and others. Founded in 1969, frog is headquartered in San Francisco, California,

with studios in Austin, TX; New York, NY; San Jose, CA; Seattle, WA; Milan, Italy; Amsterdam, Netherlands; Stuttgart, Germany; and Shanghai, China.

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**Press Contacts**

Pop!Tech Institute  
Jason Rzepka  
[jason@poptech.org](mailto:jason@poptech.org)  
718.260.9758

Text 100  
Bradley Matthews  
[BradM@Text100.com](mailto:BradM@Text100.com)  
212.331.8439