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Coding It Forward Announces Leadership Transition: Ariana Soto to Succeed Co-Founder Rachel Dodell as Executive Director & CEO

CIF Gears Up for Next Growth Phase with Leadership Change

Washington, D.C. — Coding It Forward (CIF), a nonprofit dedicated to creating opportunities for early-career technologists in public interest technology, announced a key leadership change today as it enters a new phase of growth. After seven years at the helm as Executive Director & CEO, Co-Founder Rachel Dodell will step down in May 2024 and continue serving the organization in an advisory role. Ariana Soto, Deputy Director, will assume the Executive Director & CEO position.

Since its launch in 2017, the Coding It Forward Fellowship has grown significantly, from 14 Fellows at one federal agency to over 600 Fellows working in more than 60 host offices, including 14 federal agencies, 5 states, 3 counties, and 16 cities. Over 11,000 individuals have applied for the organization's Fellowship, demonstrating the importance of expanding this opportunity. Additionally, Fellows have made significant contributions to their teams over the years, with host office partners cumulatively reporting cost savings of millions of dollars and time savings of several years. Coding It Forward plans to expand the Fellowship in the coming year and is hiring two additional team members to support the program's development.

Incoming Executive Director & CEO Ariana Soto joined in 2018 as a founding team member and has served as Deputy Director since 2021. Her leadership of the organization's business development and partnership efforts has been critical in growing the Fellowship program. She led the Fellowship's expansion to state and local placements in 2021 and continues to introduce the Fellowship to new host offices nationwide. Ariana spearheads Coding It Forward's involvement in Tech to Gov, a coalition of organizations helping technologists transition into the public sector, and previously served as Co-Chair of the Technologists for the Public Good's DEI Committee.

"Working alongside Rachel and our team over the past six years to open opportunities for early-career technologists has been an honor. I'm eager to continue building on our work and look forward to growing Coding It Forward into the future," Soto shared. "The volume of technologists raising their hands to enter this field continues to grow, and I'm excited to lead our team as we work to accomplish our mission of expanding opportunities for the next generation to contribute their diverse voices and skillsets to this ecosystem."

Rachel Dodell has played a pivotal role in transforming Coding It Forward from a dorm-room idea to a leading organization in public interest technology. During her tenure, the

organization's flagship Fellowship program has enabled early-career technologists to drive innovation in local, state, and federal government offices across the United States, contributing to a more equitable and efficient government.

Dodell has also contributed to the broader public interest technology community as an Advisory Board Member of Talent for Good, a group uniting 31 workforce non-profits tackling public challenges, and as a Code for America 2023 Summit Content Committee member, shaping the agenda of the ecosystem's largest conference.

"Creating Coding It Forward was my answer to the challenges I faced as a student eager to apply my technical skills in the public sector. It's been deeply rewarding to create new pathways and contribute to the growth of the public interest technology ecosystem. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have guided so many individuals in their careers over the past seven years." Dodell said, reflecting on her tenure. "Ariana and I have worked closely together to build a strong foundation for Coding It Forward, and as the organization reaches a new stage of maturity, I'm confident it will continue to thrive under her leadership."

Coding It Forward has played a critical role in establishing a pipeline into public interest technology careers—50% of Fellowship alumni now work full-time in government or social impact positions. In addition, the Fellowship's success inspired the Biden Administration to launch the U.S. Digital Corps, a two-year fellowship targeting early-career talent in the federal government.

Coding It Forward is also a critical contributor to the public interest technology ecosystem. The organization regularly partakes in events like the Tech to Gov Career Fair and the Grace Hopper Conference Public Interest Pavilion, inspiring and equipping early-career technologists for mission-driven careers.

"Rachel Dodell's leadership at Coding It Forward has paved the way for hundreds of young technologists to make a difference in the public interest, and I want to thank her for her tremendous work in founding, growing, and leading a nonprofit that has had a real impact across the country," said Nick Sinai, Coding It Forward Board Member. "As Ariana Soto takes the reins as Executive Director & CEO, I'm confident Coding It Forward will continue to empower the next generation of technologists to serve their country."

"Coding It Forward's work to bring the best technology talent, inclusive of all backgrounds, into public service is urgent, important, and inspiring," said Jessica Cole, Coding It Forward Board Member. "Coding It Forward is so fortunate to have two of the most talented, dedicated leaders to this mission in Rachel and Ariana, and their thoughtful transition, done

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alongside an unprecedented demand for the organization's efforts and a vibrant community of alums and supporters, ensures that Coding It Forward will thrive for years to come."
To learn more about Coding It Forward and explore open positions, please visit their website at codingitforward.com. To support Coding It Forward's work, please visit codingitforward.com/donate.

About Coding It Forward
Coding It Forward is a nonprofit for early-career technologists creating new pathways into public interest technology. Founded in 2017, the organization empowers early-career technologists to pursue public sector careers through its Coding It Forward Fellowship. It inspires its broader community of 10,000 early-career technologists through resources and events.