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**IMAGINE LA RECEIVES \$1 MILLION GRANT FROM CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION TO DEVELOP THE SOCIAL BENEFIT NAVIGATOR**

***Innovative online tool will help individuals and case managers navigate the complex public benefits landscape to answer questions about how changes in income and circumstances can impact the benefits available to families***

LOS ANGELES (November 10, 2022) – Imagine LA ([www.imaginela.org](http://www.imaginela.org)), a nonprofit organization that is laser-focused on breaking the cycle of family poverty and homelessness, has received \$1 million from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to continue incubating and piloting the innovative Social Benefit Navigator (SBN). The SBN will be an online tool for individuals and case managers seeking to access public benefits and tax credits available to them and forecast changes to those benefits with changes to income. The goal is to bring transparency to the complex social benefits system, which is often one of the biggest roadblocks to overcoming generational poverty and homelessness.

In 2021, Imagine LA and the USC Price Center for Social Innovation conducted a groundbreaking study that identified one of the primary challenges for families seeking economic mobility: the lack of information and strategies to navigate the complex and intersecting social safety net, particularly as members of a family became more stable and secured higher wages. Nightmare scenarios where a pay raise leads to a loss of benefits equal to or greater than the raise – called “benefits cliffs” – are frequent.

“Too many families worry that a little more income will make them lose their affordable housing or their public benefits. Clear information is impossible to come by,” said Jill Bauman, President

& CEO of Imagine LA. “The lack of transparency and coordination between federal, state, and local benefit sources is a big barrier. The SBN will help answer questions like, ‘*If I take this job, will I lose my monthly food benefit?*’ and help keep families on track to achieving stability and economic mobility. The SBN is a people-centered, technology-based solution for this mammoth issue, and we’re delighted that the Hilton Foundation is partnering with us to maximize its impact.”

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“Homes are where jobs go to sleep at night. Yet too many people who are risk of being unhoused must navigate a complex social benefits system that makes it challenging to grow their incomes through employment while maintaining crucial stabilizing supports. The Social Benefit Navigator will play a fundamental role that centers people with lived expertise in the development of this critical tool,” said Seyron Foo, Senior Program Officer for the Homelessness Initiative at the Hilton Foundation.

“Social services are fundamental to connecting young people, particularly young people who've been out of school or work, to key employment opportunities. The Social Benefit Navigator will help young people traverse this labyrinth so that they have the right supports during this critical stage of their careers,” said Elizabeth Cheung, Senior Program Officer for the Opportunity Youth initiative at the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

The SBN, being developed by Bauman, Brit Moore Gilmore, former President of The Giving Keys, and a team of technology, policy, and lived experience experts, will provide:

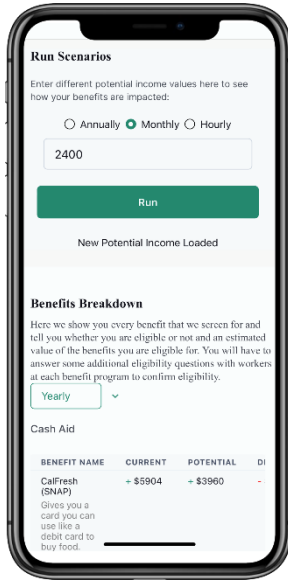
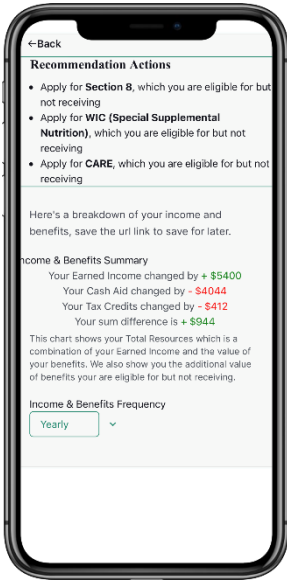
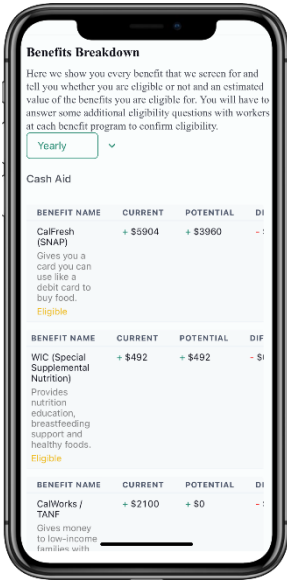
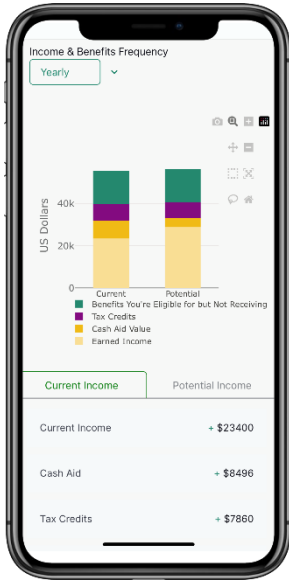
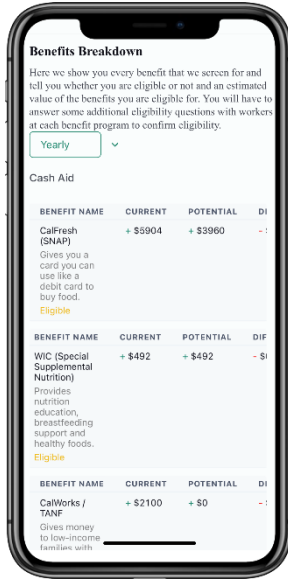
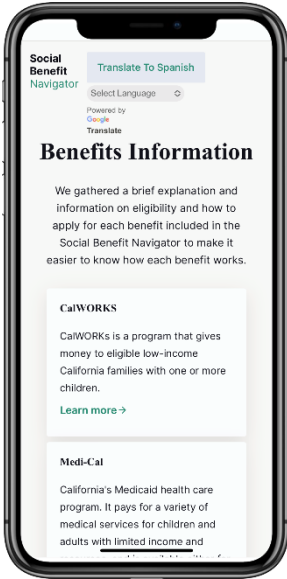
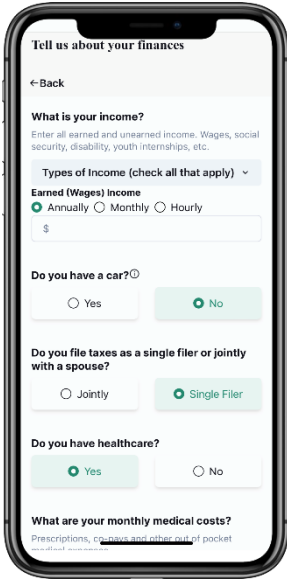
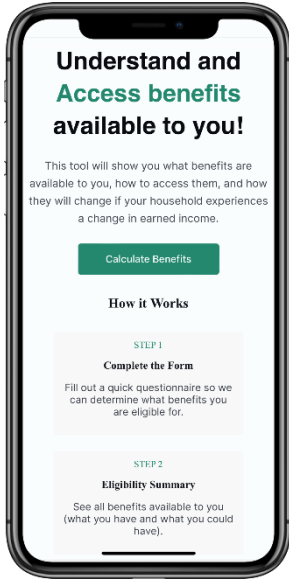
1. A comprehensive, easy to understand, online knowledge base of the public benefits and tax credits available to LA County residents.
2. Links to benefit enrollment applications and compliance reporting.
3. Online and mobile functionality showing users their available benefits and how they change over time with changes in earned income and as children age.
4. Full accessibility via Accessible Design for all categories of users, including native Spanish and translation capability.
5. Scalability via modular design structure allowing benefit data (knowledge base plus underlying algorithms) to be modified for use in other counties and states.
6. User Data across benefit silos to inform policy change.

The Hilton Foundation grant will allow for the continuation of SBN beta testing and the launch of an extensive pilot over the next two years with Los Angeles-area agency partners. The SBN will then be released more broadly in Los Angeles County and to other counties in California.

“We’re excited for what the future holds,” said Bauman. “This is a measurable, scalable and significant step to leverage the power of technology to help break the cycle of poverty and homelessness for everyone.”

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Screenshots (beta version):



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**About the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation:**

International hotelier Conrad N. Hilton established the grantmaking foundation that bears his name in 1944 to help people living in poverty and experiencing disadvantage worldwide. Today, the work continues, concentrating on efforts to ensure healthy early childhood development and sustainable livelihoods for youth, support young people transitioning out of foster care, improve access to housing and support services for people experiencing homelessness, identify solutions to safe water access, and lift the work of Catholic sisters. Additionally, following selection by an independent, international jury, the Foundation annually awards the \$2.5 million Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize to an organization doing extraordinary work to reduce human suffering. The Foundation is one of the world's largest, with approximately \$8.5 billion in assets. It has awarded grants to date totaling more than \$2.4 billion, \$339 million worldwide in 2021. Please visit [www.hiltonfoundation.org](http://www.hiltonfoundation.org) for more information.

**About Imagine LA:**

Imagine LA ([www.imaginela.org](http://www.imaginela.org)), headquartered in Los Angeles, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to breaking the cycle of family poverty and homelessness. Throughout its 16-year history, Imagine LA has created a reputation for success through its innovative Family Partnership Model, in which Imagine LA staff walk alongside families to help them build the skills and relationships to succeed.

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