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For immediate release

Oct. 27, 2009

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City of Portland to Host CONNECT Code-A-Thon, Brings Together Open Source Programmers to Advance Health IT Interoperability Nationwide

PORTLAND, OR – Oregon State University Open Source Lab (OSU OSL), along with co-host Portland State University, today announced that the universities will serve as the host for the first CONNECT Code-A-Thon being held on the West Coast. CONNECT is an open source software project that promotes the widespread use of interoperable health IT systems as well as participation in the Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN). CONNECT is developed by the Federal Health Architecture, a consortium of 20 federal agencies, within the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (Department of Health and Human Services).

During the event, roughly 200 developers from across the country will convene to address a wide-variety of product topics. Suggested development activities include working on bug fixes, platform neutrality, automated installation and testing, and other topics. Participants are encouraged to suggest additional ideas for development before and during the event itself.

“Portland is honored to host the first CONNECT Code-A-Thon – not only because it promotes open source software, an area of real strength for our region, but also because this event specifically deals with healthcare,” said Portland Mayor Sam Adams. “Everyone benefits when their healthcare records can move electronically between their care providers. The Code-A-Thon is promoting technology in support of the needs of people, and bolsters our local economy at the same time.”

The city of Portland has become a hotbed for open source projects, which made the city attractive as a location to bring together open source talent in support of health IT interoperability. The city has also been host to other popular open source conferences such as OSU Open Source Lab's Government Open Source Conference (GOSCON), O'Reilly's Open Source Convention (OSCON) and Open Source Bridge. CONNECT Code-A-Thons draw a wide variety of participants, including people from federal and state agencies, academia, health IT vendors, care providers, and other organizations.

“This is the second Code-A-Thon we’re holding, and it was important to host the event on the West Coast to highlight the fact that this isn’t just a Washington, D.C. project,” said Vish Sankaran, program director for the Federal Health Architecture. “What the NHIN and CONNECT are accomplishing in terms of enabling organizations to securely share health information will have implications throughout the country. These events help to form an ecosystem that fosters collaboration and innovation throughout the healthcare industry.”

The event will be held at PSU's University Place Hotel on November 19-20. Developers interested in participating in the event can sign up to attend at www.connectopensource.org. The event is limited to 200 participants, and seats are available on a first come, first serve basis. More information is available at www.connectopensource.org/.

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About Oregon State University Open Source Lab: The Open Source Lab is home to growing, high-impact open source communities. Its world-class hosting services have enabled Linux, Apache, Firefox, Drupal and over 50 other leading open source software projects to reach millions of users. Through custom development and industry events, the Lab's staff and students encourage open source adoption in education, government, health care and other sectors.