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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Tech Company Developing Digital Contact Tracing System
That Fully Protects Privacy of App Users**

Project Contact will assist epidemiologists tracing COVID-19

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — UnME2, Inc., a Virginia-based, high-tech software and hardware company that provides innovative GPS tracking of school bus fleets for school districts across the country (spotmybus.com), has responded to the coronavirus pandemic by creating contact tracing tools to help track COVID-19. Project Contact uses Bluetooth and GPS technologies to assist epidemiologists with traditional contact tracing while maintaining complete user privacy. What distinguishes Project Contact is the extent to which it safeguards privacy by entirely eliminating the need for any centralized, “trusted” data repository.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) have been outspoken in stating that using cell phone technology for contact tracing raises important and challenging privacy issues. They are not the only ones concerned. Nearly 300 scientists and researchers from 26 countries recently released a joint letter warning of the necessity for privacy to be the top priority for digital contact tracing.

“Rather than ignoring or skirting those important concerns, we have made them central to our mission, which is to ensure—with 100% certainty—individual privacy and anonymity for all users,” said Matt Brenner, director of Project Contact. “Furthermore,” he explained, “The Contact system will not allow any company, organization or government to discover the identity of any user unless and until a user explicitly chooses to share personally identifiable information.” Brenner continued, “Even we, at Project Contact, cannot identify any of our users unless they choose to be identified.”

There are two “faces” to Project Contact. The public facing side is an app for everyone. The app captures a combination of location information (via GPS) and *contact* information (via Bluetooth). A “contact” occurs when two phones come into close proximity for more than a threshold period of time.

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The app will take full advantage of the new Bluetooth support Apple and Google are preparing for iOS and Android phones to facilitate contact tracing. While Apple and Google stop at Bluetooth for contact tracing, Project Contact goes further. The system also makes use of location data (GPS) to help public health investigators (PHIs) understand the geographical spread and infection density of COVID-19.

The public health facing side of Project Contact provides a browser-based interface to the Contact system through which epidemiologists, biostatisticians, contact tracers, and other public health workers and researchers—PHIs—obtain data about the geographical distribution, transmission, and person-to-person contact of COVID-19. The system lets PHIs sift data in many ways.

“Project Contact is not intended to replace human PHIs—no software can,” explained Brenner. “Rather, it is a set of tools to amplify the efforts and effectiveness of public health investigators.”

Project Contact has already won the support of RIoT, an initiative of the Wireless Research Center which serves as a network of technologists, engineers, business leaders, academics, policy makers and entrepreneurs throughout the U.S. Project Contact was recently selected as one of six to participate in RIoT's Mission-R COVID-19 program, designed to support innovation for public and economic health in the aftermath of COVID-19.

For more information about Project Contact, visit [**http://contact-trace.org**](http://contact-trace.org).

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