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■ JOB HUNTING

TalentEgg website targets new grads

An innovative solution to the conundrum of highly qualified post-secondary school graduates struggling to find good jobs has just hatched.

TalentEgg is a new career web portal for students and new grads to connect with employers that are specifically looking for their fresh knowledge and skills to fill high-quality, entry-level positions.

"We offer both new grads and employers a chance to brand themselves," says founder Lauren Friese. "We're trying to create a service that's like a campus career fair, but we're taking advantage of the Internet to make it easier."

It was Friese's own personal frustration with trying to find meaningful work after graduating from Queen's University with a specialty in economics that planted the seeds for TalentEgg. She remembers sitting with a group of friends at a campus bar shortly before graduating, and discovering that everyone was scrambling to find work.

"Not a single one of us had a job lined up. We all went on to do more school," she says.

Friese went to the London School of Economics and completed a Master of Science degree. After graduating, she was able to secure a great job at a financial consulting company in London, but she never forgot about her difficult experience back home.

While there, she discovered a U.K.-based website geared towards new grads, and saw the perfect opportunity to import the concept to Canada.

Friese quit her job last October and returned to her hometown of Toronto to begin researching her idea for her new venture. A big part of that homework involved discovering which employers are actively seeking grads, which ones offer high-calibre, stepping-stone positions that lead to careers, and what their main challenges are to recruiting them.

"I realized that it's impossible for small- or medium-sized companies to go to every campus career fair in

Canada," she says. "Creating a campus career fair online is a really efficient way for them to find talent."

As her idea took shape, Friese developed a business plan and hired web developers and graphic designers to create her website, which went live on April 1.

Visitors to www.talentegg.ca may browse company profiles; search job opportunities and submit applications for their top choices; create a TalentCard — a profile that highlights their education and qualifications; and get timely career advice from recent grads and industry professionals.

The site is free to use for students (only employers pay

a fee) and already about 350 students are registered. On the employer side, 40 companies have signed up; most are in Ontario and Alberta, but Friese is working to expand that number to 100 by September and to attract employers from across the country.

So far, Friese has received much positive feedback, with some students already reporting finding work, and employers indicating they appreciate having a venue to promote themselves specifically to new graduates.

"By creating an excellent resource on a website that is extremely focused, students and new grads will have an easier time finding high-quality

job opportunities," she says.

Ironically, in focusing so intently on helping other new grads find work, Friese has effectively solved her own

employment dilemma, and she's delighted with the results.

Says Friese: "I like to connect people, I love the Internet, and I've always been in-

terested in business, so being able to put these things together — I'm having the best time."

— Sharon Aschaiek,
special to 24 hours



ENTRY-LEVEL JOBS: Lauren Friese, founder of TalentEgg, says it was her own personal frustration with trying to find meaningful work after graduating from Queen's University with a specialty in economics that planted the seeds for www.talentegg.ca.

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