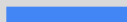


# AlumniNet



By: Alex Chang, Ben Beizer, and Aarth Sivasankar

# What Problems Does AlumniNet Resolve?

- It's hard for students to get to know about opportunities that exist in the real world post college and graduating, especially within their specific fields
- AlumniNet resolves this issue by providing a platform for Brandeis students to specifically connect with other Brandeis alumni to get first hand news and details about exciting opportunities they partook in upon graduation.
- Allows students to become motivated and inspired by other fellow Brandeis alumni through connecting and hearing about their personal experiences!

# Functionality: What Does it Do?


- ❖ AlumniNet facilitates connections between current Brandeis students and alumni
  - Provides a multifunctional platform for alumni to share their experiences, advice, and opportunities with current Brandeis students
  - Students can connect with alumni by following their user handles
- ❖ Brandeis students can create an account by entering the following information
  - Major, graduation year, and interests
- ❖ Students have the ability to connect and engage with alumni in a variety of ways
  - Community forum where students and alumni can engage in conversations on certain topics
  - Chat functionality where students can have direct 1:1 conversations with alumni
- ❖ If we had more time:
  - We would create a more social media style platform where students could have a feed where they can view the forums, posts by other students, alumni, etc

# Signup

- ❖ Must sign up to create an account in order to enter AlumniNet platform
- ❖ Provide Email, Interests, Major, and Grad year in the respective fields
- ❖ Additionally, must make a username and password to successfully sign up

## Sign Up

Username



Password

Name

Email

Interests

Major

Gradyear

Save User

# User Directory: Finding Other Users

Alex Chang	<a href="mailto:alex@brandeis.edu">alex@brandeis.edu</a>	Chang For Change	Cosi	2022	<button>Follow</button>
Aarthi Sivasankar	<a href="mailto:aarthi.sivasankar@gmail.com">aarthi.sivasankar@gmail.com</a>	Music	CS	2022	<button>Follow</button>
Benjamin Beizer	<a href="mailto:bhb987@gmail.com">bhb987@gmail.com</a>	Pianos	Computer Science	2022	<button>Follow</button>
Pito Salas	<a href="mailto:pitosalas@brandeis.edu">pitosalas@brandeis.edu</a>	AI	Cosi	1980	<button>Follow</button>
Sam Stern	<a href="mailto:samstern@brandeis.edu">samstern@brandeis.edu</a>	Coding!!!	Computer Science	2020	<button>Follow</button>
Antonella Di Lillo	<a href="mailto:antonella@brandeis.edu">antonella@brandeis.edu</a>	Data structures	Cosi	1993	<button>Follow</button>
Pito	<a href="mailto:pitosalas@gmail.com">pitosalas@gmail.com</a>	Computers	Cosi	2023	<button>Follow</button>
devin	<a href="mailto:rrrrrrr@gmail.com">rrrrrrr@gmail.com</a>	everything	CS	2022	<button>Follow</button>

- ❖ Once signed in, the user can navigate to the user directory, which provides the following functionalities:
  - Can view other users' profile and contact information
  - Link/Button functionality where users can directly email or follow other users

# Conversations

- ❖ If you're a student, you can start a conversation with alumni (and vice versa).

The screenshot shows a web interface with a teal header bar containing the text 'Welcome All Users Alumni Directory Conversation'. Below the header, the word 'Conversations' is displayed in a large, bold, black font. Underneath, there is a form with a dropdown menu showing 'Pito Salas' with a downward arrow. Below the dropdown is a text input field containing 'Help with Capstone'. Below that is another text input field containing 'Hi Pito, I am having some trouble deploying'. To the right of this second text field is a small vertical scrollbar. At the bottom of the form is a 'Save changes' button.

Dropdown list of users to select to start a conversation with.

Subject line

Conversation body

# Community Forum: Thread Posts

- ❖ From the main community forum page, you can view all available threads, and you have the option of creating a new one.

The screenshot shows a forum interface with a light blue background. At the top left, it says "You are logged in as chang". Below this is a green button labeled "New Thread". To the right of the button is a dashed orange box with the text "Button to create new thread" and an arrow pointing to the button. Below the button is the heading "Forum Threads". Under the heading are three thread entries, each with a title, author, and timestamp, all underlined. To the right of these entries is another dashed orange box with the text "History of all threads made. Click to view each thread" and three arrows pointing to the three thread entries. The thread entries are: "Test forum - posted by 3 at 2021-11-29 18:46:00 UTC", "Hi class - posted by 47 at 2021-12-07 15:27:19 UTC", and "Stack overflow - posted by 47 at 2021-12-07 15:29:53 UTC".

You are logged in as chang

New Thread

Button to create new thread

Forum Threads

Test forum - posted by 3 at 2021-11-29 18:46:00 UTC

Hi class - posted by 47 at 2021-12-07 15:27:19 UTC

Stack overflow - posted by 47 at 2021-12-07 15:29:53 UTC

History of all threads made. Click to view each thread

# Creating Posts

- ❖ You can create a new thread with a title and subject.

Enter title of thread

## New Thread

New Research Opportunity

Hello, I'm trying to share a new research opportunity for all interested CS students. The Salas Lab is currently hiring for the position of senior researcher in Rails, and would be interested in reviewing the resumes of any interested applicants.

Thanks!  
- Pito Salas

Create Forum thread

Click button to post new thread

Enter subject of thread



# Commenting on a Post

- ❖ Users can also reply to threads, in the form of comments.

[Welcome](#) [All Users](#) [Alumni Directory](#) [Conversation](#) [Community Forum](#) [Connections](#) [Feedback](#) [Logout](#)

## New Research Opportunity

Created by [chang](#)

Posted by [chang](#) December 8, 2021 11:59pm

Hello, I'm trying to share a new research opportunity for all interested CS students. The Salas Lab is currently hiring for the position of senior researcher in Rails, and would be interested in reviewing the resumes of any interested applicants. Thanks! - Pito Salas

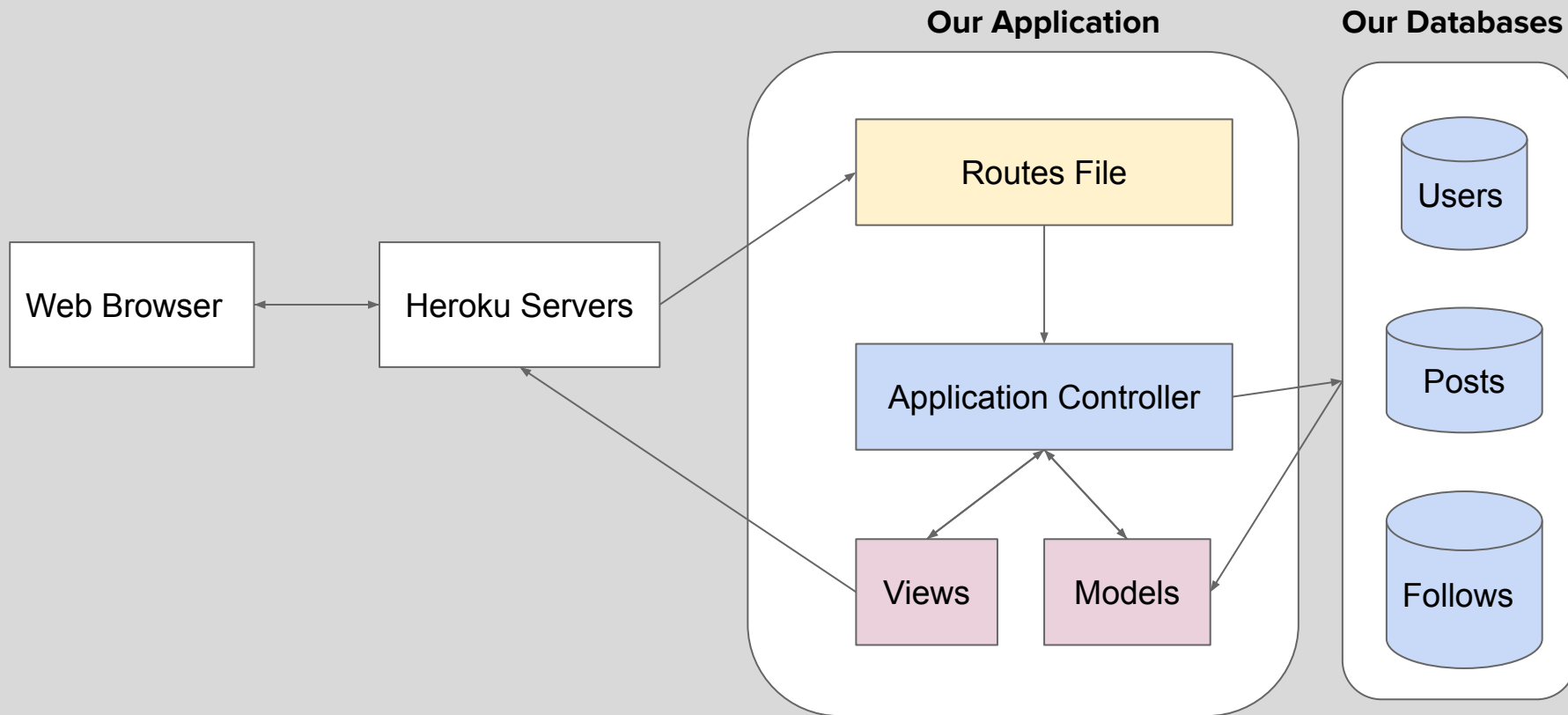
Hi, I'm very interested!

Here is the link to my Resume: [alexchangresume.com](#)

Please let me know what you think!

Create Forum post

# Product Architecture



# Forum and Conversation Controllers

```
class ForumThreadsController < ApplicationController
  before_action :set_forum_thread, except: [:index, :new, :create]

  def index
    @forum_threads = ForumThread.all
  end

  def show
    @forum_post = ForumPost.new
  end

  def new
    @forum_thread = ForumThread.new
    @forum_thread.forum_posts.new
  end

  def create
    @forum_thread = current_user.forum_threads.new forum_thread_params
    @forum_thread.forum_posts.first.user_id = current_user.id

    if @forum_thread.save
      redirect_to @forum_thread
    else
      render action: :new
    end
  end

  private

  def set_forum_thread
    @forum_thread = ForumThread.find(params[:id])
  end

  def forum_thread_params
    params.require(:forum_thread).permit(:subject, forum_posts_attributes: [:body])
  end
end
```

```
class ConversationsController < ApplicationController

  def index
    @users = User.all
    @conversations = Conversation.all
  end

  def create
    if Conversation.between(params[:sender_id], params[:recipient_id]).present?
      @conversation = Conversation.between(params[:sender_id], params[:recipient_id]).first
    else
      @conversation = Conversation.create!(conversation_params)
    end
    redirect_to conversation_messages_path(@conversation)
  end

  private

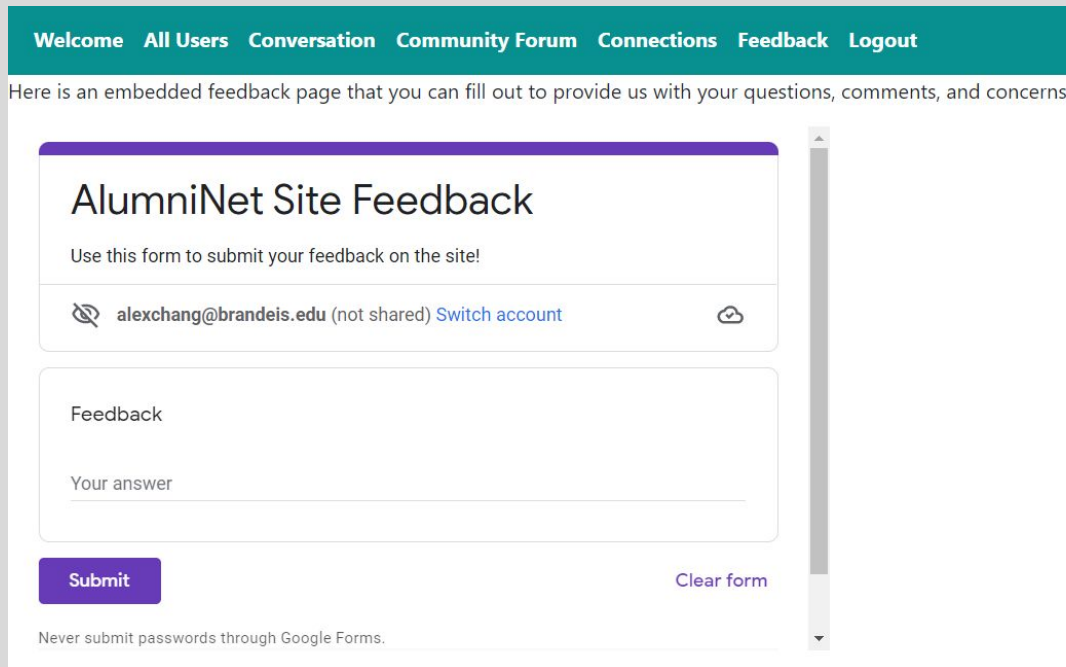
  def conversation_params
    params.permit(:sender_id, :recipient_id)
  end
end
```

# Challenging Aspects

- ❖ Implementing forum threads and conversations (making sure the threads actually posted)
- ❖ Running into migration errors and merge conflicts when all of us are pushing and pulling commits
- ❖ Implementing Bootstrap to further enhance our UI
- ❖ Ensuring that the follower/following feature was actually working when a user clicks to follow another user

# Above and Beyond

- ❖ An element we added going above and beyond was a site feedback form where all users can submit feedback on their experience navigating through the site so we can improve the quality of user experience
- ❖ Important because as a web developer we realize the importance of creating a web app that users would enjoy and find easy to use and navigate, so we wanted to embed a google survey form to take suggestions anonymously from users.



The screenshot shows a web application interface with a teal navigation bar at the top containing links: Welcome, All Users, Conversation, Community Forum, Connections, Feedback, and Logout. Below the navigation bar, a text line reads: "Here is an embedded feedback page that you can fill out to provide us with your questions, comments, and concerns". The feedback form itself is titled "AlumniNet Site Feedback" and includes the instruction "Use this form to submit your feedback on the site!". Below this, the user's email is displayed as "alexchang@brandeis.edu (not shared)" with a "Switch account" link and a cloud icon. The form contains a "Feedback" label and a text input field with the placeholder "Your answer". At the bottom of the form, there is a purple "Submit" button and a "Clear form" link. A footer note at the bottom of the form states: "Never submit passwords through Google Forms."

# Gems/Other COSI Skills Learned and Explored

- ❖ Utilized a mailboxer gem that has a mailbox object within a messegable model that manages a messaging inbox so messages can be sent and received between two or more users
- ❖ Learned how MVC concept works when implementing the follower/following feature
- ❖ Understood more on a CS/coding standpoint on how a forum thread post works

# Non-Coding Logistics & Closing

- ❖ For testing, we wanted to make sure our functionality was efficient and considered all edge cases when creating certain features and testing them.
- ❖ We divided the work based on figuring out what features we wanted to implement and all of us taking on researching specific features and then coming together and helping each other out when we ran into bugs and other implementation issues
- ❖ We are proud of what we were able to accomplish coming into the class coming in with zero with zero software engineering knowledge or even
- ❖ We wish we could have used a cool API within our project and we wish we could have improved the UI
- ❖ From working in a team we learned that everyone in the group has a different set of skills, time-commitments, and workstyles and how to plan and communicate based off these constraints

# Further Features for Future Expansions

- We want to implement Brandeis SSO (through shibboleth) to ensure that our application is only accessible by Brandeis users.
- We also want to implement the ability to “like” certain posts or comments.