

Open Campus links students, employers

Skidmore students' website is more "than just a job board"

By Jack Curran

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For many college students, getting experience and making money don't often fit together, but a Saratoga County company may be able to help connect the two.

Open Campus, founded by Skidmore College seniors Marcella Jewell and Ezra Levy, is designed to help link student free-lancers with Capital Region businesses. Though still in its early stages, the website, opencampusjobs.com, currently allows businesses to advertise short-term jobs to student professionals.

Jewell, CEO of Open Campus, said she hopes to create a more community-oriented experience after the full site is unveiled at month's end. The full site will allow businesses to search student profiles by skills, location and school to find the ideal employee, she said.

"The goal is really to connect everybody who just needs help but wants a fresh perspective from a college student," Jewell said. "It will really be more of an online community than just a job board."

Jewell is the company's only full-time employee, but she often finds part-time help for the website by using the website itself. The company also has a team of advisers and investors, and will seek further investments at the Venture Bplan forum on Wednesday at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's Heffner Alumni House.

Since its creation for a Skidmore business competition last fall, Open Campus has seen hundreds of job postings from companies including Saratoga Springs Water Company and Informz. Kenny Goodwin Jr., owner of Spin My Ad in Saratoga Springs, recently began using Open Campus.

"We just started, but we've already found people," he said. "I'm really excited to be a part of it at an early stage, because I know it's not just about the Capital Region, it's going everywhere."

For now, Jewell's focus for Open Campus is the Capital Region. She said if the company does well here she could expand it anywhere. She added she expects Open Campus to grow because it can easily connect businesses with an untapped labor force.

"There's a huge supply of college students who have basically gone untapped for so long but they're highly qualified," she said. "The need for student free-lancers is highly prevalent."

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