



DOING WHAT MATTERS FOR JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

Division of Workforce and Economic Development

***Forbes Features Innovation between  
California Community Colleges, LearnUp and Corporate Voices***

A Silicon Valley Startup That Can Find You A Job

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[Forbes Entrepreneurs](#)

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In an election year - or any year during a recession - it's difficult to find a politician, journalist or, well, anybody who isn't talking about the unemployment problem. Just as difficult is finding someone who's actually doing something about it. Well, an early-stage startup based in Silicon Valley is.

[LearnUp](#) founded last December by Alexis Ringwald and Kenny Ma, offers a real-time job training program for job seekers with their eyes on positions from entry level on up.

"There's a tremendous skills gap in this country," said Ringwald, whose first startup, green energy software company Valence Energy, was acquired by Serious Energy last fall. Job seekers often don't know what the most useful skill sets are for positions they are interested in or, when they have skills, don't know which skills to learn next.

LearnUp is a website that allows employers to post skill sets necessary to fill those positions they have open. Those skill sets are then made available to job seekers as part of an online learning program. Employers are also given access to a dashboard that allows them to peruse learners' individual profiles and what they are working on, giving them the opportunity to take the initiative in their own search for employees.

The company recently declared its commitment to share job training content with California Community Colleges and [Corporate Voices for Working Families](#) as part of the Clinton Global Initiative America. Now in public beta stages, LearnUp has already signed up employers such as Staples (NASDAQ:SPLS), Safeway (NYSE:SWY), Gap (NYSE:GPS), KPMG LLP, Prudential (London:PUK), TeleTech, and others.

The evolution of job training is destined to be peer-to-peer exchanges, said Ringwald. Technology is changing so quickly it's hard for a curriculum to adapt, she explained.

In the future, LearnUp will look to expand within the United States, though Ringwald noted that companies already working with the LearnUp have a global footprint.

LearnUp is not a non-profit organization. It's a classic example of entrepreneurs seeing a need for a service and providing a solution. In this case, if the LearnUp system turns out to be successful, everybody wins.

If you know of a similar type of socially conscious yet profit-oriented startup, tech product or fledgling business, comment below and let's take a time-out from fussing about Facebook's mobile strategy and Apple's potentially galaxy-changing television and aim the spotlight on them for a moment.