



**Press Release**

**RealTime Talent**

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**RealTime Talent is bringing WorkFountain to Minnesota**

*Senator Bonoff champions 21<sup>st</sup> Century match-making software solution for connecting employers with job seekers*

St. Paul, Minn – Building on the success of the Minnesota PIPELINE Project, Minnesota is taking another step in connecting employers and job seekers with today’s announcement that RealTime Talent has selected WorkFountain as the platform for a new kind of online labor exchange. This innovative online platform, which has found strong success in Michigan and Ohio, will bring a new level of connectivity that can reduce hiring bias, create faster matches, and ensure the best candidates get hired for the job.

The project received funding from the Minnesota Legislature in July 2016 through the leadership of Senator Terri E. Bonoff, chair of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee, who has sought to better connect students and employers through programs like the dual education, paid apprenticeship model in the Minnesota PIPELINE Project.

“While working on the MN PIPELINE Project, we heard loud and clear from employers that they are struggling to identify and connect with their future workforce” stated Senator Terri Bonoff. “I always knew there had to be a way to harness technology to bring about more meaningful connections between employers and our youth, so we set out to find a solution for them beyond just creating an education and training program and I’m pleased to say today that we found it. WorkFountain is currently doing this connection work with great success in Michigan and Ohio, and I am thrilled that they are coming to Minnesota to unlock so much potential for

our employers and students. Thank you to Jess Niebuhr of RealTime Talent and her board for being the engine of workforce solution innovation for our State and making this happen.”

The Legislature dedicated funding to RealTime Talent, a collaboration between public agencies, private industry, higher education, and workforce developers, to bring a 21st century web-based job and intern-seeking software tool that blind matches the needs of Minnesota’s employers with high school seniors and college students. RealTime Talent evaluated 11 online labor exchange platforms including CareerBuilder and Monster, but chose WorkFountain thanks to the quality of the matches. Their innovative approach allows for high-quality matches that connect the right people for the right job. “As a board member of RealTime Talent, I am really excited to be bringing this innovation to Minnesota,” shared Scott Peterson, representative of the Itasca Project and chair of the RealTime Talent board. “WorkFountain has the potential to bring tremendous efficiencies to match job seekers with employers, as well as harness the power of our diverse workforce. “

WorkFountain is specifically built with the goal of reducing hiring bias and economic inequalities through blind-correlated matching of candidates to job opportunities. By requiring both job-seekers and employers to complete job-specific questionnaires and only showing them their seven best matches, the site goes far beyond resumes or keyword searches to understand subtle differences between candidates, including their preferred work environment, daily tasks, and leadership style. “WorkFountain is a unique scalable platform that engages businesses of all sizes and creates greater efficiency in the labor market. The platform builds pathways for meaningful employment, ultimately creating jobs and strengthening the economy,” said CEO Brian Balasia co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of the company behind WorkFountain, Michigan-based Digerati.

RealTime Talent is working with the support of the Office of Higher Education to implement this pilot. They are seeking regional, education, and industry partners to build, use, and launch this new platform for the benefit of Minnesota employers and job-seekers.

RealTime Talent is a collaboration between public agencies, private industry, higher education, and workforce developers focused on helping decision-makers better align Minnesota’s workforce and economy. Based out of Minnesota Philanthropy Partners since August 2015, RealTime Talent has trained more than 900 leaders across Minnesota to use real-time job posting data to help find solutions to our state’s greatest workforce challenges. It is considered a “hub” for workforce data innovation and exploration.

For more information about this pilot project, access to the full report evaluating similar platforms, or inquiries on becoming a partner in this pilot project, please contact Jess Niebuhr at [jess@realtimentalentmn.org](mailto:jess@realtimentalentmn.org). More information is available at <http://www.realtimentalent.org/> and <http://digerati.co/workfountain/>. For questions on this or any legislation, please contact Sen. Bonoff at (651) 296-4314 or by email at [sen.terri.bonoff@senate.mn](mailto:sen.terri.bonoff@senate.mn).

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