



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Alumni Social Networks Mean Graduates Never Have to Say Goodbye –
to Friends, Colleagues or Their Alma Mater**

***Trusted Social Networks Provide Professional Networking, Career Advice and
Community Support as Graduates Begin Job Hunting***

Mountain View, CA – May 2, 2007 -- When finals are over, and the pomp and circumstance of graduation fades, where should graduates turn for the professional resources needed to get their new careers underway?

Alumni association executives at more than 90 universities across the country believe private social networks offered by their organizations can provide the answer, according to Affinity Circles, a leading provider of trusted social networks for affinity-based organizations. Unlike public networks, which are open to everyone on the Internet, the social networks hosted by alumni groups at Dartmouth, Stanford, Johns Hopkins and Wharton, and at the Universities of Cincinnati, Florida, Michigan, Texas and more, are open only to members of their alma mater. (For a complete list of schools, visit: <http://affinitycircles.com/customers>.)

The benefits of joining an alumni organization's online community extend far beyond simply keeping in touch with classmates. They also represent a valuable career resource, offering job postings, professional networking, mentoring and internship opportunities. Most are free, or available through the organization's annual membership fee.

The trusted nature of a private community creates a unique environment for professional interactions. To gain entry, each member must be authenticated, generating trust that the individual with whom a member connects really is who they say they are. In addition, because everyone shares the same affinity – namely, their alma mater -- there is an increased sense of rapport that encourages connections and an above-average willingness to help fellow community members.

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Following are a few benefits graduates will find as they venture online:

- **Jobs** – Although job boards have been popular for years, experts agree that employers are increasingly targeting social networks to recruit quality candidates. Using alumni networks, employers can target job listings or internship opportunities directly to graduates of a single university or group of schools. Those same companies benefit when members refer opportunities on to passive candidates who may be qualified, but otherwise difficult to reach. Relationship-mapping also allows job seekers to identify individuals from their peer groups who work, or have worked, at a prospective company, and who may lend insight, guidance or a referral.
- **Connections** – Remember the old adage, “It’s not what you know, but who you know” that matters. To tap into the alumni community, members use filtering and viewing features to search the network by region, profession or industry, and then dynamically plot their colleague’s locations across town, or around the world. Doing so makes it easy to connect when traveling for a job interview, for business or pleasure, or just to gain insight on a particular company, industry or metropolitan area.
- **Activities** – A trusted online network can be extremely helpful in forging professional connections offline, or visa versa. Alumni groups sponsor career events throughout the year, and offer a variety of professional networking activities at locations around the country. There are dozens of groups to join online, organized around specific chapters, clubs or industry professions, or any number of discussion topics underway that can benefit from a new opinion or perspective. For members interested in volunteerism or activism, a variety of activities exist to support local charities or rally around political or social concerns.
- **Promotions** – Alumni networks enable companies to engage a desirable demographic through interactive advertising that integrates relevant products and services into the community experience, directly benefitting members instead of cluttering the community with undesirable display ads. For example, American Airlines gained targeted brand exposure recently by running a promotion that offered exclusive travel discounts to all alumni community members.

As another college year comes to an end, today’s graduates have an exciting new resource to turn to for professional networking, career advice, job referrals and more. Most importantly, joining their alumni social network means never having to say good-bye to friends, colleagues or their alma mater. And as many will find, the same social network that serves as a timely career resource today, may very well become a valuable tool that lasts a lifetime.

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Note to Editor: For a list of alumni organizations offering private social networks, visit <http://affinitycircles.com/customers>. To talk with an alumni executive, or for a product demonstration, contact: Carleen LeVasseur, 408-264-6767, carleen@affinitycircles.com.

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