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Career Connectors' Jessica Pierce Named One of 'Forty Under 40' Class of 2011

PHOENIX, AZ- May 2, 2011 - Jessica Pierce is a woman on a mission. Her goal: to put everyone who has lost a job in Arizona back to work. And so far, she's succeeding, having helped over 3,000 Arizonans in just 18 months. It's no small feat considering the fact that her mission takes 40 or more hours per week, and she does it all for free. It's because of Jessica's tireless devotion to her cause that she was honored on this year's Forty-Under-40 list of the *Phoenix Business Journal's* best young leaders in the Phoenix.

After finding herself unemployed and her husband laid-off three times in the same year – Jessica, a mother to young children, decided she didn't want to mope around. She felt that there were others in her situation that felt the same way she did, and that together they could help each other. So she started a job seekers networking event at her church. The first meeting had about 25 attendees.

That was a little over 18 months ago. Since then, Career Connectors free job seekers events have grown to six monthly meetings, in three locations (Phoenix, Gilbert and Mesa), helping approximately 600 people monthly. It's estimated that in just 18 months, Career Connectors has served over 3500 people. But Jessica doesn't do all of this herself. She has enlisted a team of over 55 dedicated volunteers to make all of this possible.

"It's all about sharing hope, and that's what motivates me," Pierce said. "We provide all the critical resources to find new careers, but there's nothing like the fellowship of networking with people who are in circumstances similar to yours."

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Career Connectors is different than any other job seeker networking event in the Phoenix area because each event features face time with hiring companies who have jobs available. The events also include free resume help, and a professional photographer ready to take your picture on the spot. Also provided are coaching sessions with experts in interviewing, career direction, personal finance and LinkedIn. Job seekers are never charged, and may volunteer to help in areas where they want to grow or acquire skills.

Ian Salsman, a graphic artist on the market after 12 years with the same company, discovered how much things had changed since he last applied for a job. He tapped a Career Connectors resume coach for advice. "It helped me set a good tone for my resume. I didn't honestly know before that what to do in the current job market," he said.

"A whole bunch of us are in the same boat. The community of Career Connectors, and the spirit, is very supportive. The networking – I've met a tremendous number of very wonderful people," Salsman said.

Pierce will be honored, along with the other 40 Under 40 Winners at an awards ceremony at 6pm on June 16th. For more information go to:

http://www2.bizjournals.com/phoenix/events/2011/40_under_40/index.html.

About Career Connectors

Career Connectors brings public and private businesses together, along with philanthropic groups, non-profit communities, government entities, and faith-based organizations, to connect "Real People with Real Careers."

As Arizona's fastest growing job seeker program, the organization hosts six free job seeker events per month at three Valley locations (Mesa, Gilbert and Phoenix). At each event, Career Connectors showcases hiring companies, and offers free services including education workshops, DISC assessments, networking tips, interview coaching, community resources, and job leads in targeted networking groups.

Founded in 2009 by Jessica Pierce, the first Career Connectors event hosted 25 attendees. In less than two years, the organization has served over 3,000 job seekers and is actively seeking non-profit status.

For more information or to register for an upcoming event, visit <http://www.careerconnectors.net>. If you would like more information about becoming a corporate sponsor, email jessica@careerconnectors.net.

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