Open**Badges**

LEARNER STORIES: How badges can lead to jobs and new learning opportunities

X **PROBLEM:** Sara is a young web developer with skills already advanced beyond those offered by her local college. But she needs proof of her skills to help land a job.

SOLUTION:

1 **Earn badges.** Sara earns advanced web developer badges from the *School of Webcraft*, a free online learning community.

2 **Collect and display those badges.** Sara then shares her badges on her personal web site, online resume and social networking profiles.

3 **Unlock new career and learning opportunities.** Potential employees are able to see Sara's specific skills and proficiencies, with links to work samples and recommendations.

Sara: Gaining and displaying employable skills

Sara is an 18-year-old web developer who first started building websites when she was 13. She's refined her skills by tinkering on her own sites and building sites for friends. Her parents want her to go to college and get a computer science degree, but she's reluctant. The curriculum for most of those classes seems out of date and unchallenging for her.

Sara has taken online courses through Peer 2 Peer University on specific web technologies. But she has nothing formal to put on a resume to show for this learning, making it difficult for her to get job interviews, especially given her young age.

How badges help: Provide recognition for the skills she already has

Badges help Sara get recognition for the employable skills she already has. Peer 2 Peer University offers badges through their *School of Webcraft* courses and community, so Sara submits her websites and work. The community reviews her work and rates them based on set criteria and rubrics. As a result, she earns the Javascript Expert, HTML5 Pioneer, JQuery Guru and CSS Expert badges.

In addition to submitting existing work, Sara builds several new web pages using a web framework she's learning called Django. She issues herself the Django Basic badge after successfully running the initial set of exercises. Sara writes a blog post about her experience and the importance of accessibility in web development, and is awarded the Accessibility Evangelist badge by an accessibility guru from the community. She adds the badges to her personal web site and online resume, so that her community and potential employers can see them, as well as her parents.

The result: Giving employers more of what they're looking for

When applying for jobs, Sara is now able to show employers her collection of badges, each linked to specific work samples and recommendations. This provides a more clear and complete picture of Sara and her skill set. And demonstrates her competency in new technologies like Django that many traditional university curricula still don't touch.

Mozilla and Peer 2 Peer University are collaborating with learning partners on a new open badge system. Learn more or get involved at www.mozilla.org/badges

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