DirectEmployers Association and The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) have entered into a long-term alliance to develop and jointly administer an employer-funded national employment system to replace America's Job Bank, which has been discontinued by the U.S. Department of Labor.

DirectEmployers Association is a nonprofit consortium of over 670 leading U.S. employers. Its membership and board of directors includes an impressive group of industry leaders such as IBM, McGraw-Hill Companies and General Motors.

NASWA, a nonprofit organization of administrators of state unemployment and job-training services, signed a five year alliance agreement with DirectEmployers to create a National Labor Exchange. The alliance agreement is automatically renewable for successive one-year terms.

In the past, America's Job Bank was used extensively by colleges and universities to connect students and alumni with employers across the country. Large companies used it to post parttime jobs, internships, and other employment opportunities for college students and to satisfy federal job posting requirements for veterans. Small and medium-size companies used the federally-funded system for the same reasons, plus it was inexpensive. The need for employers to connect with students and alumni was not forgotten or disregarded by the architects of the new National Labor Exchange site as evidenced by the partnerships they have forged with leading college and university associations.

The National Labor Exchange has a partnership agreement with the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) to connect students and alumni nationwide with states and employers through the national employment system. Jobs are available to college students and alumni through NACElink or by linking directly to the National Labor Exchange site.

Established in 1956, NACE connects more than 5,200 college career services professionals at nearly 2,000 college and universities nationwide and more than 3,000 professionals focused on college relations and recruiting. Today, the association represents almost 1,200 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions.

The National Labor Exchange helps companies meet their general staffing needs at the time of an impending national labor shortage which has heightened the need for employers to attract a diverse workforce including minorities, veterans, seniors, physically challenged, students and women to the workforce. It also allows companies to work directly with government officials at all levels in responding to national emergency recruiting needs such as those experienced as a result of the Katrina disaster.

“The discontinuance of America's Job Bank along with the projected labor shortage caused by baby-boomer retirements and a dwindling workforce provides a formidable challenge for all employers,” says Brian E. Jensen, Global Director of Talent Acquisition at Towers Watson. “The National Labor Exchange provides an opportunity for companies to meet their compliance and staffing requirements in an environment which is owned, managed and controlled by employers in partnership with state workforce agencies.”
The National Labor Exchange allows job seekers to search jobs with one search across thousands of corporate websites and leading Internet employment search engines such as Google, Indeed.com and SimplyHired. Positions are available to job seekers from corporate websites, newspapers, trade associations, and other Internet sources in all 50 states, 230 major metropolitan cities, all U.S. cities and postal ZIP code areas, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

National Labor Exchange services are available to all employers, regardless of size, in all industries at a nominal cost. Large employers' jobs are indexed directly from their corporate websites. Jobs may also be individually entered by employers. Employers who do not have jobs available online for indexing may enter their jobs at no cost through participating state sites.

State workforce agencies are already experiencing an influx of jobs from the National Labor Exchange. The following statement was recently posted on the WorkInTexas website by the Texas Workforce Commission: “The proven Texas job-search website is bigger and better than ever. Through a partnership with the National Labor Exchange, a national job-search clearinghouse, WorkInTexas.com has boosted the number of openings available to Texas job seekers to more than 125,000, a jump of more than 25 percent. The National Labor Exchange is operated by DirectEmployers Association, a nonprofit consortium owned and managed by Fortune 500 companies, increasing the number of professional-level positions on WorkInTexas.com as well.”

The National Labor Exchange allows job seekers to search jobs with one search across thousands of corporate websites and leading Internet employment search engines.

Other states, such as California with a 60 percent increase in CA.LJOBS and Minnesota with a 50 percent increase in MinnesotaWorks.net, are reporting significant increases in the number of jobs now in their state employment site databases as a result of the Alliance.

First year performance of the Alliance has far exceeded original goals and expectations. DirectEmployers' corporate membership, which provides funding for the project, continues to grow at a rate of 10 to 15 new members per month. Corporate membership has increased from 157 member companies to over 670 member companies supporting the Alliance since it began operations.

The National Labor Exchange is fully funded by leading U.S. corporations through their membership in DirectEmployers Association. There are no charges to states, schools or job seekers for any services provided. To support the National Labor exchange, employers pay an annual membership fee which is determined by the DirectEmployers board of directors and approved by the member companies.

To continue funding the program, employers are motivated by 1) the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) prediction of a potential labor shortage of more than 10 million skilled workers by 2020 and their resultant need to work with the states and other sources to reach groups such as minorities, the senior workforce, veterans, women, the physically-challenged, employment-eligible immigrants, and others; and 2) their need to comply with state and federal employment-related regulations such as Affirmative Action Program objectives, and 3) the cost of commercial job boards which continues to skyrocket.