Applied Magic launches A.I. platform to help alleviate youth loneliness, alienation and isolation.

Applied Magic's Campus Social is a novel integration of technologies to help college students find friends with shared interests.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, USA, March 11, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Applied Magic launched Campus Social this month. Campus Social is a set of apps that work seamlessly together to determine interests, cluster users into interest groups, and help start conversations. Its initial focus is to help incoming freshmen make friends before they arrive on campus with the objective of improving freshmen retention, academic performance, and mental health. The idea is simple: students who develop friendships early have a more successful freshmen year. They're happier, healthier, and more invested in the community.

> "
> Campus Social is a solution to the problem of a digital world producing more isolation and alienation. In the end, we're focused on healthy, real-world relationships."
>
> *Nathan Allen*

Across college campuses, the use of mental health services is rising sharply. At Yale, more than 50% of undergraduates use the college's mental health services. In a recent survey of nearly 48,000 college students, 64% said they had felt "very lonely" in the previous 12 months. Students also reported feeling "overwhelming anxiety" (62%) or "very sad" (69%).

According to a freshman survey administered by UCLA, a record-high of 12% of students reported "frequently" feeling depressed during the past year, while almost 35% of students frequently felt anxious.

The paradox of a digital world producing more isolation and alienation requires a solution. So a group of former IBM Watson researchers, academics, and college students worked on this project over the past year. Campus Social combines established technologies with novel clustering algorithms to deliver a unique solution to the day-1 socialization problem. The discussions occur on Campus Social's messaging app, which is unique for each college. There is no public access or advertisements or data-selling. The purpose of the app is to enable honest conversations that evolve from online discussions to on-campus friendships.

"Our goal is not to solve all these problems but rather to address one component. We won't eliminate the randomness of finding friends, but we should be able to increase the odds," Applied Magic's Nathan Allen said. He added, "A lot of these freshmen issues start very early, before the college knows about them. So we developed something that helps address these issues before students even step on campus."

"Clustering algorithms are well-established but are focused on consumer predictive behavior. There's almost no research on clustering large groups into high-probability friend networks," Allen said. He also observed that most research into friend-network formation simply concludes that "people who are likely to make friends, make friends. The others get left behind."

The team behind Campus Social believes that if students are grouped by interests and supported by bots and other students, then that improves the typical random dynamic of friend-network development that mostly benefits the socially outgoing.

Campus Social is accepting a limited number of clients now until April 29 to launch Campus Social for Fall 2022.

About
Applied Magic is an A.I. lab focused on developing innovative products. Campus Social is its third project. If you'd like to learn more, visit campussocial.org.

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