

Cognizant U.S. Foundation, Walmart.org and Microsoft Philanthropies Partner to Increase Inclusion in the Technology Sector through Computer Science Education

Grants totaling \$3 million for CodePath.org will triple campus locations offering industry-informed computer science curriculum, and support 7,000 diverse students pursuing technology careers

NEW YORK, Nov. 19, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- The Cognizant U.S. Foundation, Walmart.org and Microsoft Philanthropies today announced a collective \$3 million investment to deliver industry-informed computer science curriculum at 150 college campuses nationwide, and support women and students of color studying and pursuing careers in technology. The investment in CodePath.org, a nonprofit dedicated to expanding the pipeline of underrepresented populations in technology, will enable the organization to triple the number of two- and four-year colleges participating. Programming will expand to more than 75 cities nationwide and increase annual capacity by 250 percent, serving as many as 7,000 students by 2021.

While the tech industry is facing a talent shortage of [500,000](#) workers, just [7.4 percent](#) of industry employees are Black and [8 percent](#) are Latinx. Further, recent studies show that Black and Latinx students who pursue a computer science major are [one-third](#) more likely to drop out of those programs than their white peers. The same studies show women are earning only 18% of computer science bachelor's degrees annually in the United States.

CodePath.org works closely with major technology companies and colleges in realigning computer science curriculum to meet employer needs for specific skills, and put students of color and women on a path to technology careers. Since 2015, CodePath.org has helped train more than 2,500 students across 49 colleges and universities.

"The Cognizant U.S. Foundation identifies and invests in solutions that are transforming our country's education and workforce systems to be responsive to a new and ever-evolving future. CodePath.org's model is creating pathways into technology careers for underrepresented populations in nearly every market across the U.S.—and we are proud to support their expansion," said Kristen Titus, executive director of the Cognizant U.S. Foundation, which has committed \$1.5 million toward the investment. "There is no issue more central to the Foundation's mission than ensuring all populations have equal access to careers in technology. Bringing like-minded funders together means that CodePath.org can scale more quickly."

CodePath.org's programs work in partnership with computer science professors to provide industry-informed, accredited coursework at no cost. According to [The New York Times](#), the number of undergraduates majoring in computer science more than doubled from 2013 to 2017, yet tenure-track faculty rose just 17 percent, leading universities to put caps on computer science enrollment.

Recognizing the opportunity to equip computer science departments and professors with resources, CodePath.org realigns curriculum while providing intensive, on-demand support and training designed to help students through the recruiting and technical interviewing process. A recent study of CodePath.org alumni found students were approximately three times more likely to receive a technical job offer after completing the program than if they had applied through a company's standard recruiting process.

"The computer science coursework offered by most colleges today is disconnected from shifting industry demands. But closing equity gaps in tech requires that we not only equip students with the technical skills employers are looking for, but also prepare them to navigate technical interviews and other barriers that often close the door on tech careers for women and students of color," said Michael Ellison, founder and CEO of CodePath.org. "The support from Cognizant U.S. Foundation, Walmart.org, and Microsoft Philanthropies is fueling a paradigm shift in talent development where, instead of competing for the top students at a few elite institutions, we scale systems that can teach any student, in any classroom to excel in tech."

"Building a more diverse technology sector is good for business and society," said Julie Gehrki, vice president of Philanthropy at Walmart. "We are proud to support CodePath.org in their efforts to provide more opportunities for women and people of color while building a more inclusive technology sector."

"One of the fundamental challenges in the technology sector is the need to increase opportunities for women

and people of color," said Kate Behncken, vice president and lead of Microsoft Philanthropies. "Building on Microsoft's longstanding commitment to helping young people access and learn computer science, our collective partnership with CodePath.org will help scale its unique model to ensure everyone, no matter their background, can be the leaders and computer scientists solving tomorrow's challenges."

About CodePath.org

CodePath.org is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit transforming computer science education for underrepresented minorities at 49 colleges and universities, doubling in size every semester. Working closely with major technology companies like Facebook, CodePath.org is changing what is being taught and how it is being taught in CS programs nationwide to increase diversity in tech using a system-wide solution.

About the Cognizant U.S. Foundation

[The Cognizant U.S. Foundation](#) is a 501(c)(3) private foundation supporting STEM education and skills training across the United States. Launched in 2018 with an initial \$100 million investment from Cognizant, the Foundation has since awarded \$13 million to organizations working to educate and train the next generation of workers in communities throughout the U.S.

About Philanthropy at Walmart

Walmart.org represents the philanthropic efforts of Walmart and the Walmart Foundation. By leaning in where our business has unique strengths, we work to tackle key social issues and collaborate with others to spark long-lasting systemic change. Walmart has stores in 27 countries, employing more than 2 million associates and doing business with thousands of suppliers who, in turn, employ millions of people. Walmart.org is helping people live better by supporting programs that work to accelerate upward job mobility for frontline workers, address hunger and make healthier, more sustainably-grown food a reality, and build strong communities where Walmart operates. To learn more, visit www.walmart.org or find us on Twitter @walmartorg.

About Microsoft

Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT" @microsoft) enables digital transformation for the era of an intelligent cloud and an intelligent edge. Its mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more.

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Additional assets available online:

<https://news.cognizant.com/2019-11-19-Cognizant-U-S-Foundation-Walmart-org-and-Microsoft-Philanthropies-Partner-to-Increase-Inclusion-in-the-Technology-Sector-through-Computer-Science-Education>