

## As AI Reshapes Entry-Level Jobs, Cognizant Synapse Grantees Show Skills Training Gives Young Workers an Edge

*Data from global nonprofit partners shows consistent gains in employment, earnings and long-term stability for underestimated youth*

TEANECK, N.J., July 15, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- As the world marks [World Youth Skills Day](#), Cognizant (NASDAQ: CTSH) today highlighted Synapse grantee-published data showing that skills-based training programs are delivering measurable, long-term economic mobility for young people even as artificial intelligence (AI) rapidly redefines entry-level work. World Youth Skills Day celebrates the importance of equipping young people with the skills they need for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), an estimated 260 million young people - primarily ages 15–24 - are not in education, employment or training, creating persistent barriers to workforce entry. At the same time, new research from Cognizant and Pearson's [The AI Workforce Pulse](#) shows that nearly all (94%) HR leaders expect AI will generate new entry-level roles that didn't exist before and these roles will evolve toward supervising and collaborating with AI systems rather than executing routine tasks. The rapid pace of AI adoption is creating a disconnect between the skills organizations have and the skills they need, making talent strategy one of the defining challenges of the moment.

Launched in 2023, Cognizant's [Synapse](#) initiative is a company-wide effort to advance learning and development, forge technology partnerships and invest in community giving. It brings together nonprofits, educational institutions and industry partners to expand access to digital and professional skills training worldwide. The initiative has already surpassed its initial goal of reaching one million individuals and now aims to upskill two million people by 2030. Results from nonprofits supported by Cognizant's Synapse initiative demonstrate that when young people gain access to structured, employer-connected skills training, they don't just find jobs but also are better positioned to build lasting financial stability.

### Proven Outcomes Across Leading Workforce Programs

Published data from select Synapse-supported nonprofit organizations shows consistent, high-impact outcomes for young adults. Across programs and geographies, when young people gain access to structured, employer-connected skills training, outcomes have improved quickly and demonstrated lasting benefits. Notably, these outcomes were achieved before the latest wave of AI disruption - demonstrating that skills-first models were already solving the workforce challenges many employers are only now beginning to define.

- **[Year Up United](#):** Young adults earn 30% higher wages on average six years after completing the program compared to a control group, representing the largest earnings impact ever recorded for a workforce development program in a randomized controlled trial.
- **[Braven](#):** The Class of 2025 outpaced their peers nationally in quality outcome attainment by 12 percentage points (57% vs 45%) within six months of graduation.
- **[CodePath](#):** Program alumni earn a median first-year salary of \$20,000 higher than their computer science peers, with 74% from low-income or underestimated backgrounds, demonstrating the effectiveness of skills-first pathways.
- **[Generation](#):** While 90% of alumni were unemployed before enrollment in the program, 76% remain employed 2–5 years later, 73% earn a living wage, and nearly half support their families financially.
- **[The King's Trust](#):** The King's Trust supports young people aged 11–30 across the United Kingdom to build their confidence and skills for work. Over the last five years, three in four young people supported by the charity have moved into employment, education or training. The charity's work has generated an estimated £3.9 billion in social value over the past decade.

"As AI transforms how work gets done, the ability to learn, adapt and apply new skills is becoming the most important currency in the labor market," said Kathy Diaz, Chief People Officer, Cognizant. "The data from our Synapse nonprofit partners shows that when young people are given access to the right training and opportunities, they don't just enter the workforce but thrive in it. On World Youth Skills Day, we're reminded that scaling access to skills is one of the most powerful ways to expand economic opportunity."

Cognizant is also investing directly in early-career talent, having hired 20,000 new graduates in 2025 and currently expects to exceed that number in 2026.

### Preparing Youth for an AI-Driven Workforce

The findings come at a pivotal moment for the global workforce. Cognizant's [New Work, New World](#) research shows that AI already could be impacting 93% of jobs, while the AI Workforce Pulse study highlights a growing gap between employer needs and workforce readiness. As entry-level roles evolve toward AI collaboration, adaptability and problem-solving, employers are placing greater emphasis on the human and transferable skills that Synapse-supported programs are already building at scale.

"We see every day how access to training and support can change the trajectory of a young person's life," said Susan Murray,

CEO, Year Up United. "With the right combination of technical skills, durable skills and hands-on experience, young people are not only securing jobs but building careers, supporting their families, and strengthening their communities. Partnerships like Synapse are critical to making that impact at scale."

For more information, visit the Synapse webpage [here](#).

### About Cognizant

Cognizant (Nasdaq: CTSI) is an AI Builder and technology services provider, bridging the gap between AI investment and enterprise value by building full-stack AI solutions for our clients. Our deep industry, process and engineering expertise enables us to build an organization's unique context into technology systems that amplify human potential, drive tangible outcomes and keep global enterprises ahead in a fast-changing world. See how at [www.cognizant.ai](http://www.cognizant.ai) or @cognizant.

### Forward-Looking Statements

This press release includes statements that may constitute forward-looking statements made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, the accuracy of which are necessarily subject to risks, uncertainties and assumptions as to future events that may not prove to be accurate. These statements include, but are not limited to, express or implied forward-looking statements relating to the effects and speed of AI's impact on the workforce and the job market. These statements are neither promises nor guarantees but include findings of the reports discussed above and remain subject to a variety of risks and uncertainties, many of which are beyond Cognizant's control, which could cause actual results to differ materially from those contemplated in these forward-looking statements. Existing and prospective investors are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date hereof. Factors that could cause outcomes to differ materially from those expressed or implied include general economic conditions, the impact of technological development and competition, the competitive and rapidly changing nature of the markets Cognizant and its clients compete in, the competitive marketplace for talent and its impact on employee recruitment and retention, and the other factors discussed in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Cognizant undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise, except as may be required under applicable securities law.

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