

Cognizant On Track to Hire 1,500 U.S. College Graduates in 2026 to Power AI-Era Workforce

Company expands U.S. early-career programs across university partners, apprenticeships, and frontier engineering to build the next generation of American AI talent

TEANECK, N.J., July 15, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Cognizant (Nasdaq: CTSH) today announced it is on track to hire 1,500 college graduates in the United States by the end of 2026, deepening its commitment to building homegrown AI talent and strengthening the American technology workforce. The hires span Cognizant's core technology services business, its Belcan engineering subsidiary, and a new Frontier Engineers talent program designed to attract top technical graduates into accelerated roles at the forefront of enterprise AI.

The announcement underscores Cognizant's broader strategy to invest in U.S. talent at scale during a pivotal moment in the AI transition. Globally, the company has hired approximately 27,000 campus graduates since 2025. The U.S. class of 1,500 in 2026 reflects the company's accelerating domestic commitment, supported by an expanded hub strategy with recruiting, training, and office engagement across multiple U.S. locations.

"America's next generation of technologists will define how AI gets built, deployed, and governed" said Ravi Kumar S, CEO of Cognizant. "Hiring 1,500 college graduates in the United States this year is both a workforce investment and a statement of confidence in American talent and a recognition that the AI-builder ramp-up begins on campus. We are equipping these graduates with the skills, mentorship, and real-world experience to become the backbone of the AI economy."

A Continuum of Campus Programs

Cognizant engages students across nearly every stage of their academic journey, with active recruiter and mentor presence at more than 40 U.S. universities. The company's signature programs include:

Fusion Internship: Cognizant's flagship internship offers an AI-enabled, experiential model featuring cohort hubs across major North American cities and meaningful project-based work. The program begins with a Week 1 culture-building onboarding in Denver and includes an AI Leadership Speaker Series, hands-on use of AI tools, and structured mentorship. Interns conclude with final presentations highlighting their contributions. The program is designed to serve as a key pathway to full-time hiring as Cognizant continues to expand early-career conversion outcomes. Fusion was named to Vault's 2026 Best Internships list.

Ignite & Elevate: Ignite engages first-year students through early career exploration, professional development, and exposure to Cognizant's culture and opportunities. Elevate extends this journey for sophomore students with structured skill-building, mentorship, and targeted preparation for internship pathways, strengthening the pipeline into Cognizant's early-career programs.

Frontier Engineers: A new 2026 stream is targeting top technical graduates with an accelerated career program and premium project assignments aligned to Cognizant's most advanced AI engagements. Frontier Engineers will work directly with client organizations to reimagine and realign business processes for an AI-enabled environment. Frontier Certified Engineers will specialize in rethinking how work gets done — identifying where AI can reshape operations, eliminate friction, and create lasting competitive advantage. The role requires both strategic thinking and technical fluency, making it one of the most consequential pivot points into the AI-era workforce.

Registered Apprenticeships: Cognizant is a national program sponsor of registered apprenticeships with the U.S. Department of Labor. The apprenticeship program provides earn-while-you-learn pathways for early-career associates, combining structured on-the-job training, mentoring, coaching, and technical instruction.

Cognizant recruits actively from universities across the United States, with deep partnerships at institutions including the University of Georgia, Arizona State University and the University of Kentucky.

"Cognizant has been an important partner in helping our students explore career opportunities and gain insight into the changing demands of the modern workplace," said Santanu Chatterjee, Dean and Dr. Harold A. Black Distinguished Professor at the University of Georgia Terry College of Business. "As AI continues to reshape industries, collaborations between employers and universities play a critical role in preparing graduates who can combine technological fluency with the judgment, communication skills, and leadership capabilities that organizations need. We value opportunities to work with companies like Cognizant that engage with students throughout their educational journey."

"Arizona State University and the W.P. Carey School of Business have long championed the idea that higher education and industry must work hand in hand," said Raghu Santanam, Senior Associate Dean for Executive Education, Corporate Partnerships and Lifelong Learning at the W.P. Carey School of Business. "Cognizant exemplifies that partnership. Their presence on our campus, their investment in student development, and their willingness to hire broadly from technical and non-technical disciplines demonstrates a model for how companies can help close the talent gap in the AI era. We are grateful for

their continued commitment to ASU graduates."

"Belcan represents exactly the kind of partner OneUK was established for—deep Kentucky roots, global reach and a strong commitment to community, talent, innovation and workforce development," said Landon Borders, University of Kentucky senior executive director for research and development partnerships. "We're excited about the opportunity to work more closely with Belcan to create meaningful experiences for our students, faculty and staff while expanding the university's impact across the Commonwealth."

"Cognizant's registered apprenticeship program is exactly the kind of employer-led initiative we need to see more of across the technology sector," said Katie Adams, Chief Delivery Officer, Safal Partners. "By creating structured, earn-while-you-learn pathways for early-career associates, Cognizant is building a sustainable pipeline of skilled American workers at a moment when AI fluency is becoming essential in virtually every occupation. We are proud to support their efforts and look forward to expanding this partnership."

The 1,500 U.S. hires in 2026 draw from both technical and non-technical backgrounds, reflecting Cognizant's belief that broad, interdisciplinary talent pools, paired with strong training infrastructure, produce the most capable and adaptable associates. Cognizant draws from a diverse range of academic disciplines and actively recruits first-generation college graduates and candidates from underrepresented communities. More than 16,000 current Cognizant associates previously worked elsewhere and returned to the company, a testament to the strength of its culture and career development offerings.

About Cognizant

Cognizant (Nasdaq: CTSI) is an AI builder and technology services provider, building the bridge 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, realize tangible returns and keep global enterprises ahead in a fast-changing world. See how at cognizant.ai or [@cognizant](https://twitter.com/cognizant).

Media Contact:

Alex Dudley

Alex.dudley@cognizant.com

SOURCE Cognizant Technology Solutions Corporation

<https://news.cognizant.com/2026-07-15-Cognizant-On-Track-to-Hire-1,500-U-S-College-Graduates-in-2026-to-Power-AI-Era-Workforce>