Cognizant and Teach For America Announce Winners of Annual Innovation in Computer Science Education Awards



Dec. 5, 2022 — Today Cognizant and Teach For America have announced the winners of the annual *Cognizant Innovation in Computer Science Education Awards*. Now in its second year, the awards recognize outstanding educators and individuals advocating for and expanding access to PK-12 computer science education across the United States. This year's winners, listed below, have demonstrated extraordinary leadership as they inspire and open doors for the young learners they serve.

- **Robert Fox**, **Miami, Fla.** — Director of Professional Learning, Miami EdTech
- **Maha Hasen, The Bronx, N.Y.** — Computer Science Teacher and Math Department Chair, Fordham High School for the Arts
- **Jeffrey James Wile**, **Lititz, Pa.** — Computer Science Educator and Tech Resource Coach, Warwick School District and Computer Science Teachers Association Chapter President for Susquehanna Valley
- **Jennifer Nieves, Philadelphia, Pa.** — Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer, The Lighthouse Family School

"We are thrilled to recognize this cohort of educators and their work to unlock new opportunities and create equitable pathways through computer science," said Becky Schmitt, Chief People Officer at Cognizant, and Teach For America New York Advisory Board Member. "It's an honor to support impactful community leaders like Robert, Maha, Jeffery, and Jennifer, who are connecting today's students to the skills needed for fulfilling careers in the future."

Research shows that students who have access to AP Computer Science courses in high school are three times more likely to major in a STEM field in college. And while 53% of high schools across the U.S. provide computer science courses — up from 51% in 2021 — inequities in computer science access and participation persist. For instance, as of this fall, only 32% of students in high school computer science courses are young women.

"In our work at Teach For America to ensure that every child can learn, lead, and thrive in our 21st-century global society, expanding access to computer science education is essential," said Elisa Villanueva Beard, CEO of Teach For America. "We are grateful to work with Cognizant to invest in these award winners and their students, who deserve to have every door open to them."

Cognizant and Teach For America also extend congratulations to runners-up Marion Cannon, Game Design Pathway Instructor at the Atlanta College and Career Academy; and Annie Kelly, digital Media Arts and Computer Science Teacher at the School District of Jenkintown, for their exemplary work in their communities.

Meet the Award Winners

Robert Fox

"I know firsthand the impact that one good teacher can make. Computer science allows students to express themselves in a variety of ways, draw connections between the material and nearly any other passion, and foster the skills they need to be successful in the evolving world we live in today."

Learn more about Robert.

Maha Hasen

“In order to get more students access to a quality computer science curriculum, we must start by educating and inspiring a community of leaders to take intellectual risks and learn computer science themselves so they can in turn teach our students.”

Learn more about Maha.

Jeffrey James Wile

“Computer science is a skill that everyone will be using in the future, and if we don’t begin to level the playing field now, inequities will continue to expand. I fear our movements to expand computer science are unintentionally leaving subsets of students out.”

Learn more about Jeffrey.

Jennifer Nieves

“The future is technology — and we must provide early exposure for our students. I believe every educator should be an advocate for computer science education. We must also advocate for students experiencing inequities. It takes a village to advocate for and prepare our 21st-century learners to be college and career ready.”

Learn more about Jennifer.

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