



### Nonprofit

Est. 2017

### Headquarters

Washington, D.C.

### Early talent hires per year

170

coding it forward >

## Coding it Forward streamlines their alumni outreach with Handshake's Advocates

### 61%

open rate vs 23% average for nonprofits

### 22%

increase in students viewing Coding it Forward year over year

### 46%

increase in student job views

### 187%

increase in applicants from underrepresented groups

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Fellows love hearing from other fellows first hand so it's no surprise that **alumni are the best salespeople to speak on behalf of our programs**. Those relationships can make all the difference in the hiring process.

**Rachel Dodell**

Cofounder and Executive Director

Coding it Forward (CIF) is a nonprofit that connects early technology professionals with opportunities in the public sector. Through their fellowship programs, CIF places hundreds of students in positions across more than 40 federal, state, and local government agencies—spanning data science, software engineering, design, and product management. CIF decided to leverage Handshake's Advocate user role to increase their application volume, improve program diversity, and streamline their alumni outreach.

## Goals

Long before they purchased Handshake, CIF worked closely with their alumni network to facilitate meaningful relationships with candidates. However, their process for connecting alumni with candidates was incredibly manual—requiring hours of time and resources for an already strapped team. To reach their goals faster, CIF needed to rethink how they leveraged their alumni network and take a more streamlined, scalable approach to getting them involved in the recruiting process.

### 1. Save time and improve productivity

With only two employees on staff, CIF needed to think strategically about how and when they connected alumni and current fellows with candidates.

### 2. Increase application volume

With limited brand recognition, CIF struggled to tap into the right sources to effectively reach early technology professionals interested in pursuing careers in the public sector.

### 3. Prioritize DEI in a measurable way

To increase representation and bring unique perspectives to their fellowship programs, CIF needed to prioritize the role that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) played in their recruiting efforts.

## Solutions

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Through Handshake's Advocate role, CIF creates authentic candidate experiences by connecting prospective fellows with alumni and current fellows in a streamlined way. Advocates is a Handshake Premium user role that lets employers virtually introduce candidates to like-minded peers across their organization.

### Automating workflows to reach more candidates

With the help of Advocates, CIF can centralize all of their candidate communications to a single place on Handshake. Now, students can reach out to fellows and alumni directly to learn firsthand about their experiences—and no longer need to rely on the CIF team to serve as an intermediary.

### Personalizing outreach at scale

By sending introductory messages at scale through Campaigns, CIF guarantees that their candidates have access to alumni and current fellows as a resource during the recruiting process—leading to an authentic candidate experience and a more informed and engaged applicant pool.

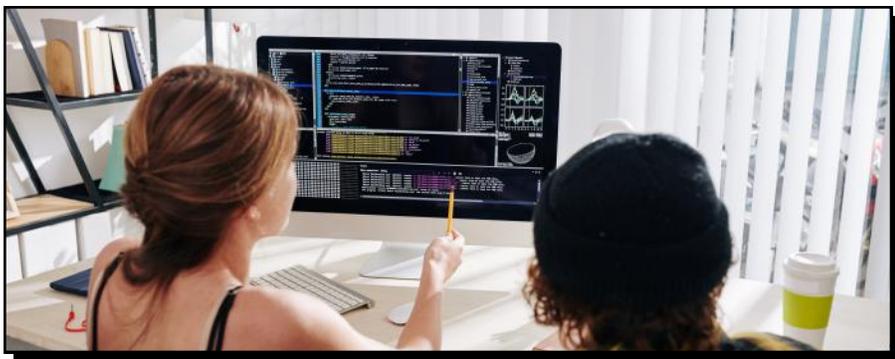
### Improving workforce representation

To foster a more inclusive, less intimidating candidate experience, CIF uses Advocates to connect candidates from underrepresented backgrounds to alumni in similar roles. In fact, CIF saw a 187% increase in applicants from underrepresented groups last year.

## Conclusion

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With the help of Handshake Advocates, CIF now takes a streamlined, student-first approach to their fellowship recruiting—improving both applicant quantity and quality.



Before Handshake, we leveraged our alumni relationships during the hiring process to ensure prospective fellows had an authentic candidate experience. Now that we have Advocates, **we can automate that process**, which saves our team time and allows us to expand our reach even more.

**Rachel Dodell**

Cofounder and Executive Director

**Reach out to learn how to build a proactive recruiting strategy.**

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