



**LOCAL TOP STUDENT NAMED A COCA-COLA SCHOLAR SEMIFINALIST
Casa Grande Union High School Student Chosen for Next Level
In Prestigious Scholarship Program**

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Contact: Lauren O'Brien

laurenobrien@coca-cola.com

- Merlin D'Souza, a student at Casa Grande Union High School, has been named a Semifinalist for the 2021 class of the [Coca-Cola Scholars Program](#).
- 1,609 high school seniors were selected as Semifinalists from a pool of 99,403 submitted applications from across the country based on their academic excellence, leadership and service demonstrated in school and community activities. [See the full list](#).
- The Semifinalists are in the running for 150 college scholarships worth \$20,000.

Local high school senior Merlin D'Souza has been named a Semifinalist for the 2021 class of the Coca-Cola Scholars Program, moving to the next round of the selection process to become a Coca-Cola Scholar and receive a \$20,000 college scholarship. A joint effort of Coca-Cola bottlers across the country and The Coca-Cola Company, the Coca-Cola Scholars Program is the largest corporate-sponsored, achievement-based scholarship program in the United States. With the addition of the 2021 class, the [Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation](#) will have provided more than 6,450 Coke Scholars nationwide with over \$75 million in scholarships over the course of 33 years.

"We believe that identifying these young leaders throughout the country and encouraging their passion for serving others not only empowers the students, but also lifts up those around them." said [Jane Hale Hopkins](#), President of the Foundation. "The Coca-Cola system is dedicated to giving back to the communities they serve, and the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation is proud to be a part of that commitment."

In addition to receiving college scholarships, those students selected as Coca-Cola Scholars will be welcomed into a vibrant and growing family of alumni that have become a powerful force for positive change in the world. Through networking, collaborations, and friendships, the group strives to make a greater impact together. Recent initiatives include a podcast called [The SIP, Coke Scholars Care](#) (Coke Scholars doing good in the midst of the pandemic), and the [fifth year of a coaching program](#) that partners seasoned alumni with first-year Scholars as they transition to college. Every 5 years, all alumni are invited to a [Coca-Cola Scholars Leadership Summit](#).

Semifinalists are now asked to complete Phase 2 applications, which include essays, a recommendation, and transcripts. An independent selection committee will review the applications

and select 250 Regional Finalists by the end of January to participate in online interviews. 150 Coca-Cola Scholars will be named in March to receive a \$20,000 college scholarship and participate in the Coca-Cola Scholars Leadership Development Institute facilitated by program alumni.

The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation celebrates and empowers visionary leaders who are refreshing the world. With its 32nd class of Coca-Cola Scholars, the Foundation has provided more than \$72 million in scholarships to over 6,300 program alumni who together have become a powerful force for positive change. Learn more at www.coca-colascholarsfoundation.org.

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