

wizehive

# A Refreshing Partnership With Real Results

A Case Study with the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation



COCA-COLA  
SCHOLARS  
FOUNDATION

The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation works to improve the world through investing in exceptional high school students. But it's much much more than a program that awards college financial assistance to outstanding students. Achievement-based, the foundation is committed to constantly connecting and nurturing a family of passionate, motivated, service-oriented leaders.

Since their inception in 1986, the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation has awarded more than \$73 million in scholarships, nearly \$3.4 million a year. Their scholars come from all over, too, from all 50 states and almost 4,000 high schools, supporting 1,400 college students each year.

The prestigious program also received nearly 200,000 applicants annually, so it's not surprising that when their homegrown software started breaking under the volume, they quickly began looking for a new platform that could handle both capacity and complexity.

"Previously, the foundation was working in a hodge-podge of disparate systems

that were never fully integrated,” said Jeremy Sale, selection and recruitment manager of the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation (CCSF). This worked sometimes, but in key times, like application deadlines, the volume would simply crash the system. CCSF needed a system that could be new, fresh, innovative, and easily updated, while staying true to their process and feel. They wanted to move into the 21st Century and provide applicants with a better experience.

### **Their “hopes and dreams became a reality” with WizeHive**

As Sale and his team began looking at prospective scholarship management platforms, at the top of their must-have list was a system that could run both phases of their application: an initial scoring algorithm that narrows the list of finalists down to 2,000 and second-round reviewer assignments based on the selection districts where the students reside.

They also knew they needed a product that had best-in-class tech support, product design, and was easy to use, but they also wanted a solid relationship with their partner. After reviewing the solutions and services of about a dozen providers and receiving recommendations from other organizations, CCSF signed with WizeHive. “At every turn, WizeHive lead the pack as the best team,” said Sale.

“In the beginning, the WizeHive team was hands-on in helping us understand what the product could do, but also creative in understanding our needs,” said Sale. “Once we signed on and began working with WizeHive, our hopes and dreams started to become reality.”

Without an internal IT team to maintain the product, CCSF appreciate the expertise WizeHive’s staff could bring to the table, allowing the scholarship team to be involved with designing the application and back-end processes and automations but rely on the Implementation Team to do the heavy lifting.

Integrations were also very important, and CCSF asked WizeHive’s product team to replicate their previous systems outputs into their new Zengine system. Working together as a team to expand capabilities and phase releases, WizeHive was able to meet all of CCSF’s needs, including the implementation of a ScholarSnapp integration. “Everything came together magically,” said Sale.

## Looking back at a year of success

After a first year live on Zengine, CCSF was happy to report that the system and staff outperformed the expectations of the foundation. “We saw zero down time in our application in the first year,” said Sale. “In previous years, the old platform would see some days, as much as eight hours, of down time.”

“Ultimately, with WizeHive the team now has a platform that is stable,” said Sale. “We’ve seen a huge increase in overall applications and submitted applications due to our application being up and available to access.”

“Scoring is also a breeze and the process for making edits or changes is simple, not cumbersome or stressful,” continued Sale. In fact, the WizeHive’s platform and guidance was able to eliminate more than 140 clicks an applicant needed to complete the Phase One application. They also saw applicants reduce their time to complete an application by more than two hours.

As prep begins for the next program year, CCSF is singing the praises of WizeHive. “The staff is one of the most professional and genuine groups I’ve worked with,” said Sale. “I can pick up the phone or send an email, and someone will get back in touch with a reliable solution or work on getting to the correct fix.”

“Choosing WizeHive as a partner has made a difference for us. We are working with a group of experienced, passionate individuals who make the whole process feel like family.”

