



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Questions about your state's delegates, alternates or state selection process: Mrs. Marian E. Johnson at marian.johnson@la.gov or (225) 342-1721.

For general information about the United States Senate Youth Program:  
Program Director Ms. Rayne Guilford (800) 425-3632 or rguilford@hearstfdn.org.

## **Louisiana Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program** **Students to Participate in Online Program and to Receive \$10,000 Scholarship**

**January 11, 2022, Washington, D.C.** —The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) announces that high school students Mr. Anil Sinai Cacodcar and Mr. Mahir Ashhabur Rahman will join Senator Bill Cassidy and Senator John N. Kennedy in representing Louisiana during the 60th annual USSYP Washington Week, to be held March 6 — 9, 2022. Anil Cacodcar of Lafayette and Mahir Rahman of Kenner were selected from among the state's top student leaders to be part of the 104 national student delegation who will each also receive a \$10,000 college scholarship for undergraduate study. Due to the ongoing pandemic, the 2022 program will be held online, through a comprehensive and highly interactive virtual education and leadership forum.

The USSYP was created by Senate Resolution 324 in 1962 and has been sponsored by the Senate and fully funded by The Hearst Foundations since inception. Originally proposed by Senators Kuchel, Mansfield, Dirksen and Humphrey, the Senate leadership of the day, the impetus for the program as stated in Senate testimony is "to increase young Americans' understanding of the interrelationships of the three branches of government, learn the caliber and responsibilities of federally elected and appointed officials, and emphasize the vital importance of democratic decision making not only for America but for people around the world.

Each year this extremely competitive merit-based program provides the most outstanding high school students - two from each state, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education Activity - with an intensive week-long study of the federal government and the people who lead it. The overall mission of the program is to help instill within each class of USSYP student delegates more profound knowledge of the American political process and a lifelong commitment to public service. In addition to the program week, The Hearst Foundations provide each student with a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship with encouragement to continue coursework in government, history and public affairs. All expenses for Washington Week are also provided by The Hearst Foundations; as stipulated in S.Res.324, no government funds are utilized.

Anil Cacodcar, a senior at Episcopal School of Acadiana, serves as the president of the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council. He engages with his community through his roles as president of his school's Honor Council and co-captain of the Quiz Bowl team. As the secretary general for Louisiana Model United Nations and a delegate for the Conference on National Affairs, he enjoys learning more about current events and getting other students interested in the political process. In particular, he has a keen interest in state-level government. He is a National Merit semifinalist and volunteers with Schoolhouse.world to provide free SAT tutoring for students around the world. As a semifinalist in the Breakthrough Junior Challenge, Anil animated a video detailing how prion (a type of rare, fatal brain diseases) work. He aspires to one day pursue a career in which he can unite his interests in science, technology, communication, and public policy.

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Mahir Rahman, a senior at Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies, serves as chief of staff to the State Board of High School Democrats. Additionally, he is president of his Quiz Bowl team, his High School Democrats chapter, and Mu Alpha Theta, the national mathematics honor society. His political awareness and eagerness to compete is also evidenced by his prolonged involvement with various community political campaigns and with the National Academic Games League. He has earned an AP Scholar with Distinction recognition as well as being selected as a National Merit semifinalist. Mahir plans to pursue a medical career as well as serve as a political representative of his community.

Chosen as alternates to the 2022 program were Mr. Jason Willis, a resident of Ruston, who attends Ruston High School and Mr. Ashton Lee, a resident of Loranger, who attends Hammond High Magnet School.

Delegates and alternates are selected by the state departments of education nationwide and the District of Columbia and Department of Defense Education Activity, after nomination by teachers and principals. The chief state school officer for each jurisdiction confirms the final selection. This year's Louisiana delegates and alternates were designated by Cade Brumley, Louisiana Superintendent of Education.

During the program week, the student delegates will attend online meetings and briefings with senators, the president, a justice of the Supreme Court, leaders of cabinet agencies, among others.

In addition to outstanding leadership abilities and a strong commitment to volunteer work, the student delegates rank academically in the top one percent of their states among high school juniors and seniors. Now more than 6,000 strong, alumni of the program continue to excel and develop impressive qualities that are often directed toward public service. Among the many distinguished alumni are: Senator Susan Collins, the first alumna to be elected U.S. senator; Secretary of Transportation and former Mayor of South Bend Indiana, Pete Buttigieg; former Senator Cory Gardner, the second alumna to be elected U.S. senator and the first to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives; former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, the first alumna to be elected governor; former Chief Judge Robert Henry, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit; former Ambassador to West Germany Richard Burt, former presidential advisors Thomas "Mack" McLarty and Karl Rove. Additional notables include former Lt. Governor of Idaho David Leroy, Provost of Wake Forest University Rogan Kersh, military officers, members of state legislatures, Foreign Service officers, top congressional staff, healthcare providers and other university educators.

Members of the U. S. Senate Youth Program 2022 annual Senate Advisory Committee are: Senator Christopher A. Coons of Delaware, Democratic Co-Chair; Senator Susan M. Collins of Maine, Republican Co-Chair; Advisory Members: Senator Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM); Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley (D-OR); Senator Tina Smith (D-MN); Senator Mark R. Warner (D-VA); Senator Mike Braun (R-IN); Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV); Senator James M. Inhofe (R-OK); and Senator M. Michael Rounds (R-SD). Each year, the Honorary Co-Chairs of the program are the vice president of the United States and the Senate majority and minority leaders.

**For more information please visit: [www.ussenateyouth.org](http://www.ussenateyouth.org)**

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