

# Press Release



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“Amazing new ideas” on protecting the environment

## Young Champions of the Earth 2018 announced

### Covestro continues support for implementing innovative projects

Seven young people from around the world have been recognized as Young Champions of the Earth by UN Environment for their big ideas on environmental protection. They are the second winners of the award, which is sponsored by Covestro, a leading manufacturer of materials for sustainable development.

From over 750 applicants, 35 regional finalists aged 18-30 were selected by a global jury for their creative, innovative and impactful ideas that offer novel solutions to today’s pressing environmental challenges.

The seven winning projects address issues ranging from coral farms and women in engineering to chemical recycling technology and making musical instruments from trash (summaries below).

Each winner receives USD 15,000 in seed funding as well as expert mentoring, needs-based training and access to networks to help them implement their plans over the coming year.

### Amazing new ideas

“Young people across the world have once again come up with amazing new ideas for environmental protection,” says Dr. Markus Steilemann, CEO of Covestro. “The second year of the Young Champions of the Earth competition has been a huge success, and as one of the world’s leading suppliers of high-tech materials for sustainable development we are proud to partner with UN Environment in motivating young innovators to tackle our planet’s enormous challenges.”



“For all the urgent environmental challenges we face, these Young Champions are a powerful reminder that solutions are within our grasp,” says Erik Solheim, Head of UN Environment. “Each of these winners has a unique story to tell. Taken together, the message our Young Champions send to the world is even stronger: together we can innovate the future we want while preserving the environment we need.”

The Young Champions will be officially recognized at an award gala in New York on September 26 during Climate Week NYC, organized by the Climate Group in collaboration the UN and the City of New York, and which coincides with the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly.

### **Summaries of the winning entries**

- 25-year-old Indian mechanical engineer Arpit Dhupar, for his groundbreaking technique that filters 90% of particulate matter from diesel generators without impairing mechanical performance. Rather than disposing of the matter, the carbon is turned into ink pigment, used for printing.
- Gator Halpern, who launched a network of coral farms to restore endangered reefs. The 27 year-old, originally from San Diego and currently based in the Bahamas, is recognized for his innovative land-based system of coral farms.
- Palestinian-Kuwaiti entrepreneur Heba Al-Farra, for her “Women in Energy and Environment” initiative, which aims to advance the careers of female engineering and environmental professionals in the green industry across the Middle East and North Africa, providing them with support for creative solutions, technical skills and future opportunities.
- Hugh Weldon, 25, Irish mechanical engineer and co-founder of Evocco, for his smartphone app which calculates a user’s ecologic footprint based on scanned shopping receipts.
- Chinese diver and entrepreneur Miao Wang, 30, for her initiative “Better Blue”, which builds global networks of divers between diving centers, empowering them to become advocates and practitioners in marine conservation through capacity building and programs to educate citizens about science.
- 24-year-old American co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of BioCollection Miranda Wang, for her novel chemical recycling technology which has made new products and materials recyclable for the first time.



- Egyptian artist and painter Shady Rabab, 26, for his big idea to bring together children working as garbage collectors in Luxor and teach them how to make musical instruments from trash, eventually taking the “Garbage Conservatoire Band” and self-made instruments on the road to various events around Egypt to advocate better waste management in Egypt and beyond.

For more information the winners and their projects, visit the Young Champions of the Earth website at <http://web.unep.org/youngchampions/>

**About Covestro:**

With 2017 sales of EUR 14.1 billion, Covestro is among the world's largest polymer companies. Business activities are focused on the manufacture of high-tech polymer materials and the development of innovative solutions for products used in many areas of daily life. The main segments served are the automotive, construction, wood processing and furniture, and electrical and electronics industries. Other sectors include sports and leisure, cosmetics, health and the chemical industry itself. Covestro has 30 production sites worldwide and employs approximately 16,200 people (calculated as full-time equivalents) at the end of 2017.

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