

bio.



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Malala Yousafzai

Children's Activist, Women's Rights Activist (1997-)

As a young girl, Malala Yousafzai defied the Taliban in Pakistan and demanded that girls be allowed to receive an education. She was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman in 2012, but survived.

Synopsis

Malala Yousafzai was born on July 12, 1997, in Mingora, Pakistan. As a child, she became an advocate for girls' education, which resulted in the Taliban issuing a death threat against her. On October 9, 2012, a gunman shot Malala when she was traveling home from school. She survived, and has continued to speak out on the importance of education. She was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2013. In 2014, she was nominated again and won, becoming the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Early Life

On July 12, 1997, Malala Yousafzai was born in Mingora, Pakistan, located in the country's Swat Valley. For the first few years of her life, her hometown remained a popular tourist spot that was known for its summer festivals. However, the area began to change as the Taliban tried to take control.

Initial Activism

Yousafzai attended a school that her father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, had founded. After the Taliban began attacking girls' schools in Swat, Malala gave a speech in Peshawar, Pakistan, in September 2008. The title of her talk was, "How dare the Taliban take away my basic right to education?"

In early 2009, Yousafzai began blogging for the BBC about living under the Taliban's threats to deny her an education. In order to hide her identity, she used the name Gul Makai. However, she was revealed to be the BBC blogger in December of that year.

With a growing public platform, Yousafzai continued to speak out about her right, and the right of all women, to an education. Her activism resulted in a nomination for the International Children's Peace Prize in 2011. That same year, she was awarded Pakistan's National Youth Peace Prize.

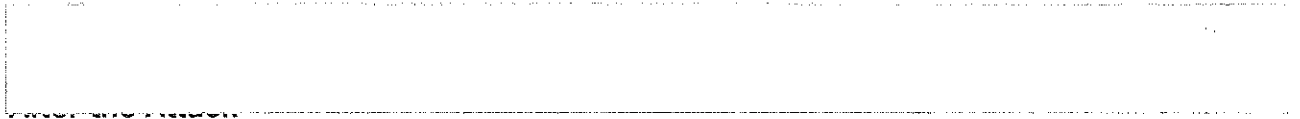
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Targeted by the Taliban

When she was 14, Malala and her family learned that the Taliban had issued a death threat against her. Though Malala was frightened for the safety of her father—an anti-Taliban activist—she and her family initially felt that the fundamentalist group would not actually harm a child.

On October 9, 2012, on her way home from school, a man boarded the bus Malala was riding in and demanded to know which girl was Malala. When her friends looked toward Malala, her location was given away. The gunman fired at her, hitting Malala in the left side of her head; the bullet then traveled down her neck. Two other girls were also injured in the attack.

The shooting left Malala in critical condition, so she was flown to a military hospital in Peshawar. A portion of her skull was removed to treat her swelling brain. To receive further care, she was



Once she was in the United Kingdom, Yousafzai was taken out of a medically induced coma. Though she would require multiple surgeries—including repair of a facial nerve to fix the paralyzed left side of her face—she had suffered no major brain damage. In March 2013, she was able to begin attending school in Birmingham.

The shooting resulted in a massive outpouring of support for Yousafzai, which continued during her recovery. She gave a speech at the United Nations on her 16th birthday, in 2013. She has also written an autobiography, *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*, which was released in October 2013. Unfortunately, the Taliban still considers Yousafzai a target.

Despite the Taliban's threats, Yousafzai remains a staunch advocate for the power of education. On October 10, 2013, in acknowledgement of her work, the European Parliament awarded Yousafzai the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. That same year, she was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. She didn't win the prize, but was named a nominee again in March 2014. In August of the same year, Leanin.Org held a live chat on Facebook with Sheryl Sandberg and Yousafzai about the importance of education for girls around the world. She talked about her story, her inspiration and family, her plans for the future and advocacy, and she answered a variety of inquiries from the social network's users.

In October 2014, Yousafzai received the Nobel Peace Prize, along with Indian children's rights activist Kailash Satyarthi. At age 17, she became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. In congratulating Yousafzai, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said: "She is (the) pride of Pakistan, she has made her countrymen proud. Her achievement is unparalleled and unequalled. Girls and boys of the world should take lead from her struggle and commitment." U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described her as "a brave and gentle advocate of peace who through the simple act of going to school became a global teacher."

For her 18th birthday on July 12, 2015, also called Malala Day, the young activist continued to take action on global education by opening a school for Syrian refugee girls in Lebanon. Its expenses covered by the Malala Fund, the school was designed to admit nearly 200 girls from the ages of 14 to 18. "Today on my first day as an adult, on behalf of the world's children, I demand of leaders we must invest in books instead of bullets," Yousafzai proclaimed in one of the school's classrooms.

CLOSE

That day, she also asked her supporters on [The Malala Fund website](#): "Post a photo of yourself holding up your favorite book and share why YOU choose [#BooksNotBullets](#) - and tell world leaders to fund the real weapon for change, education!" The teenage activist wrote: "The shocking truth is that world leaders have the money to fully fund primary AND secondary education around the world - but they are choosing to spend it on other things, like their military budgets. In fact, if the whole world stopped spending money on the military for just 8 days, we could have the \$39 billion still needed to provide 12 years of free, quality education to every child on the planet."

In October 2015, a documentary about Yousafzai's life was released. [HE NAMED ME MALALA](#), directed by Davis Guggenheim (*An Inconvenient Truth, Waiting for Superman*), gives viewers an intimate look into the life of Malala, her family, and her commitment to supporting education for girls around the world.

Article Title

Malala Yousafzai Biography

Author**Website Name**

The Biography.com website

URL<http://www.biography.com/people/malala-yousafzai-21362253>**Access Date**

December 14, 2015

Publisher

A&E Television Networks

Original Published Date

n/a

Alex Lin, Teenage Activist

By Sal Cardoni

He's overseen the recycling of 300,000 pounds of e-waste. He's successfully lobbied the Rhode Island state legislature to ban the dumping of electronics. He's used refurbished computers to create media centers in developing countries like Cameroon and Sri Lanka to foster computer literacy.

He's Alex Lin and he's just 16 years old.

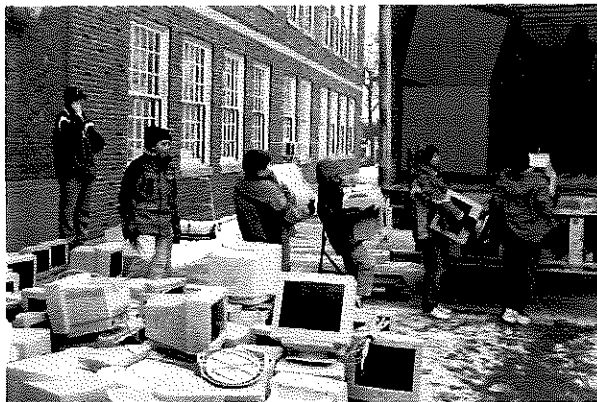
"I don't see anything uncommon in it," says Lin, a high school senior from Westerly, Rhode Island. "My friends and I have been doing this since fifth grade. It's become part of our lifestyle."

Lin's catalytic moment came in 2004 when he chanced upon a *Wall Street Journal* article. "It first alerted me to the e-waste problem, and warned of an e-waste tsunami to come."

E-waste, or electronics garbage, is the fastest growing section of the U.S. trash stream. In 2007, Americans discarded more than 112,000 computers daily, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Even worse, just 18 percent of discarded televisions and computer products were collected for recycling.

While there is no federal law banning e-waste, 20 states have passed legislation mandating statewide e-waste recycling.

If only the states with e-waste laws in their 2010 legislative pipeline—Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nebraska, and Utah, to name a few—had an Alex Lin at their disposal.



Alex Lin, third from right, has taken e-waste matters into his own hands.

Photo: Courtesy Alex Lin

The Rise of E-Waste, the Birth of Team WIN

Almost all electronic devices contain varying amounts of hazardous chemicals and heavy metals—lead, mercury, and cadmium being among the most deadly to the human body.

"When improperly disposed of—i.e. dumping, burning, etc.—these chemicals can seep into the surrounding environment, harming humans, crops, and ecosystems," says Lin. "With the advent of the computer in the 1970s, electronics use has increased exponentially, bringing with it ever-increasing amounts of waste. In the majority of the

world, this waste is improperly disposed of, resulting in untold damage to the environment.”

Reduce, reuse, and recycle. These are the so-called 3Rs of eco-friendly behavior. To start, Lin and his student-led community service team, Westerly Innovations Network (WIN), concentrated their efforts on recycling.

“We worked with Metech International to hold an e-waste recycling drive that collected over 21,000 pounds of electronics,” says Lin. With assistance from a private recycling company and the municipal government, they established a permanent receptacle that collects up to 5,000 pounds of e-waste per month, and more than 300,000 pounds to date.

However, once Lin and his team discovered that reusing computers was much more efficient than recycling, they decided to create a computer-refurbishing program. “To make this sustainable,” says Lin, “we worked with the Westerly School System to incorporate computer refurbishing into the A+ Certified Computer Repair class's curriculum.”

More than 300 refurbished computers were donated to low-income students without home computer access. “It was an eye-opening experience,” says Jeff Brodie, 16, of the moment when he, Lin, and other WIN teammates walked into one Westerly residence to set up a computer. “The kids were running around very excited.”

A Field Trip to the State House

Mission accomplished, right? Not quite. Lin's e-waste eradication efforts were only ratcheting up. “We recognized that the true sustainability of our project lay in legislation,” says Lin. Through research, they learned of an e-waste bill that had been in the works for years in Rhode Island.

Seizing on the opportunity to translate their local success into the language of a state law, Lin and his team met with Arthur Handy, the state representative sponsoring the bill, and testified before both the House and Senate Environmental Committees. “He came across very well,” recalls Handy of Lin's presentation as an 11-year-old. “They were clearly well prepared and had clearly thought the issue through.”

The bill, however, did not pass. “We were all disappointed; we had put in all this time and they didn't listen to us,” says Brodie.

“Looking back at what might have gone wrong, we came to realize that bill was too complicated,” says Lin. To combat this, they drafted a local ordinance encompassing all the positive points of the law. “It was simple: ban e-waste dumping,” says Lin.

This go-round, Lin and his WIN Team sent out thousands of fliers, made radio announcements, wrote articles for local newspapers, and made presentations in front of both student and town council audiences. Handy says he was impressed that Lin had not given up after the failure of the first bill. “It showed that it was not just a school project,” says Handy. “It showed that it was something he had a passion for.”

Local media got wind of the story and helped spread the word to more than a million people in the greater Westerly area. “The biggest challenge against progress is simply awareness,” says Lin. “When my team and I first surveyed our town, only 12

percent of the residents knew how to properly dispose of e-waste.”

The Law of the Land

Fast-forward to October 28, 2005—the day local officials in Westerly unanimously passed Lin’s e-waste ordinance. “It was then proposed as a bill to the State House,” says Lin. “This time we brought a petition with 400 signatures and again testified before both the House and Senate. Bill H7789 passed on July 6, 2006.”

It is now illegal to dump electronics in Rhode Island. Proudest of all might be Lin’s father, Jason, 47, an engineer who served as the team’s mentor. “It was a tremendous amount of work,” he says with a chuckle.

The bill set the stage for more comprehensive legislation that passed in 2008. “Now Rhode Island requires manufacturers to take back their computers and televisions, and to pay for the collection and recycling of them,” says Sheila Dormody, the Rhode Island Director for Clean Water Action, a nonprofit environmental advocacy organization that worked with Lin.

The youth activist awards were piling up nearly as fast as the heaping piles of e-waste were vanishing. In 2005 alone, WIN won first place at the Community Problem Solving Competition, third place at the Volvo Adventure Competition sponsored by the United Nations Environment Program, and a gold prize at the Christopher Columbus Awards.

Scaling Up

As Lin crisscrossed the country and the globe attending these award ceremonies—from Lexington, Kentucky, to Gothenburg, Sweden; from Orlando, Florida, to Aichi, Japan—he came up with the idea for WIN’s next e-waste endeavor.

“Cooperating with satellite WIN Teams that we established through connections made at conferences and competitions, we have worked to create media centers in areas in need of information technology,” says Lin. And like that, the WIN Network went global.

“To date, we have sent out over 60 computers in seven media centers to countries such as Cameroon, Kenya, Mexico, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines,” says Lin.

Lin hopes that these media centers will become a model for the sustainable and responsible reuse of computers between nations.

He also wants to “raise awareness of e-waste in developing countries so that they will be able to create the infrastructure to handle e-waste before it becomes a problem.”

According to a report issued by the United Nations Environment Programme last month, the amount of e-waste in developing nations is expected to greatly increase. By 2020, the report says, e-waste from old computers in South Africa and China will have jumped 200 percent to 400 percent from 2007 levels, and by 500 percent in India.

For all of his success, Lin’s most far-reaching legacy might prove to be the one closest to home. Like his father did for the original team, Lin has begun mentoring his 11-year-old sister Cassandra’s Junior WIN Team: shepherding their efforts to recycle used cooking oil into biodiesel that will help heat homeless shelters.

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Originally Published: 3/26/2013

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Anti-bullying activist spreads message of kindness

By **Nia McMillan**
Junior, Exeter

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Have you ever been bullied? According to DoSomething.Org, 2 out of 3 teens are verbally or physically harassed each year.

Emily-Anne Rigal, a 19-year-old freshman at Columbia University, helps people conquer their problems with bullying.

Emily-Anne is very passionate about her work. She is the founder and director of WeStopHate, a nonprofit program dedicated to raising the self-esteem of teens.

In a recent phone interview, she said, "In elementary, I was bullied so bad that I switched to a new school because of it. I had no friends, and the popular people made rumors about me. It was damaging to my self-worth."

When Emily-Anne started at her new school, she made friends, which boosted her self-esteem, she said.

Emily-Anne created WeStopHate in 2010, which was her sophomore year of high school. She saw what her peers were going through and also acknowledged her personal struggle and made a program to help others. She supports a big cause, which takes a lot of time and energy.

"I stay motivated by the message that WeStopHate promotes," she said. "It helps prevent teens from committing suicide, and changes the way they see the world."

Emily-Anne has spoken at many events in New York, such as the Seventeen Magazine Body Peace Breakfast and the 2012 We Are Family Foundation Gala.

What advice would she give to someone being bullied?

"Talk to someone one-on-one," she said. "People are less vulnerable without others around."

Along with her WeStopHate foundation, and speaking out against bullying, Emily-Anne hopes to create a "Bully Button" on Facebook.

WeStopHate also stops cyberbullying, which is rampant.

"When you are cyberbullied it feels like you can't get away," Emily-Anne said.

According to DoSomething.org, only 1 in 10 victims tells a parent or trusted adult about their cyberbullying abuse.

"With the 'Bully Button,' I hope to make cyberbullying more conscious in the minds of users,"

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she said. "If they are reported, they will lose their Facebook privileges."

The "Bully Button" will be similar to the like button, activated by the click of a button to report the online abuse.

Emily-Anne's goal is to stop all forms of bullying.

"Each form of bullying is traumatic in its own way," she said.

If you or anyone you know is being bullied, check out her website at WeStopHate.org. Watch the videos, spread the word. Who knows? Maybe you can save a life.



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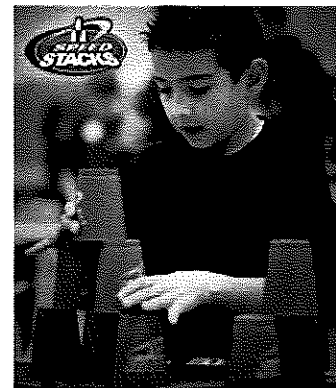


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Teenage girl is dogs' best friend



By Briar Marbeck

Friday 9 Aug 2013 12:41 p.m.

Online Reporter



Faye Carey is helping re-home dozens of abandoned dogs (Photo: Supplied)

While most teenage girls are busy doing their nails and downloading the latest music, Faye Carey is helping re-home dozens of abandoned dogs.

The 16-year-old Waikato teen volunteers with her local branch of Animal Control, giving abandoned animals a second chance at life.

She has set up a Facebook page, Animal Re-home Waikato, where she advertises puppies and dogs who need adopting.

It all started when Faye underwent a week of work experience at Animal Control last November.

"We picked up a puppy in the pound the first day I went to Animal Control and then on my last day he was still there and I felt really sorry for him," she says.

"So I advertised him on TradeMe and he got a lot of interest and he went to a lovely home in Auckland."

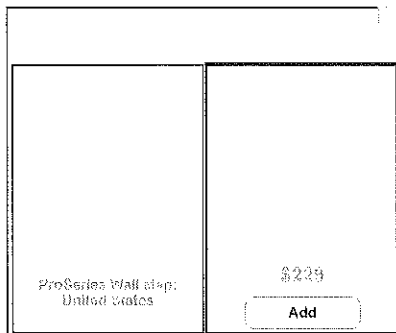
The idea for the Facebook page came when Faye was trying to re-home a litter of abandoned kittens, and needed a free way to advertise.

The page has nearly 300 likes and a loyal following of satisfied new parents. Faye has managed to re-home more than 60 dogs.

"This takes a lot of the heat off the pound for us trying to get these dogs into homes," says Animal Control officer Vaughan Oliver. "The good thing about it is Faye takes time to present our dogs in the best possible light.

"Faye helps with giving our dogs that generally miss out in the first instance of getting adopted ... a second chance."

Faye still spends every Friday volunteering at Animal Control, grooming the new puppies and photographing them for the Facebook page. She also spends around three hours each night organising for people to view the animals, setting up adoptions and replying to emails.



"It can be stressful trying to juggle, because we've got animals at home and schoolwork and chores and everything else. But I think it's easy for me to do my work, because I'm quite dedicated to the puppies and dogs," she says.

"It's rewarding as well, so that makes it worthwhile."

The pound receives as many as 20 new dogs each week, most of which need re-homing.

"The majority of our dogs that we find are generally out roaming or abandoned and often we get a lot of dogs who are surrendered by their owners who can no longer look after them," says Mr Oliver.

"With Faye's help and work we can quite often get these dogs into suitable caring homes quite quickly now, so it's good. The turnaround is quite fast."

While Faye will still be at high school for two more years, she hopes to keep working with animals.

"I'd love to have a career in Animal Control. I quite enjoy dealing with people and making a difference."

And, Animal Control will be happy to keep her.

"We're just quite lucky and blessed to have Faye," says Mr Oliver.

"She really restores my faith in the community out there. She does a great job helping out."

Faye posts pictures of new dogs available for adoption each week on her Facebook page.

3 News





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The Clock Is Ticking: Youth and Environmental Activism

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by *Joi Officer, 15, Laura Cockman, 17, and Rebekah Taft, 17 of Y-Press*

Young people have a unique relationship with the environment: They are often the first affected when something goes wrong, yet the least represented when decisions are made.

They, more than any other generation, have been raised to feel a responsibility toward the environment. And that's important because they will be the first generation in charge of correcting the problems caused by the widespread pollution of the atmosphere and rampant misappropriation of natural resources.

Youth today feel the "clock is ticking in terms of the amount of time we have to deal with the major issues like clean air, clean water and global warming," says Sharon Smith, program director of Brower New Leaders at the Earth Island Institute, a support group for youth environmental campaigns and initiatives.

Growth in activism

Smith has seen firsthand the growth in environmental activism. "I graduated from college in 1999, and right in my first year out of college I went to an eco conference, which at that time was held in the Northeast. It was one of the largest environmental youth conferences held to date, and it had about a thousand people."

Contrast that with a 2009 conference that drew 12,000 young people from all 50 states, she said. "You can really see the growth of the environmental movement even over the past decade by looking at these conferences and the trainings designed and led and initiated by young people."

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- Grind for the Green, San Francisco, CA
- Urban Roots, E. Austin, TX
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Canon Envirothon has seen similar growth in youth activism. A nonprofit specializing in the delivery of environmental education for high school students, the program has grown from three states in 1988 to 54 states and provinces in North America today.

Young people are "looking for avenues where they can make a difference and become knowledgeable, and then they can take and share that knowledge and experience," said Clay Burns, executive director of Canon Envirothon in Mississippi. They need to be "willing and prepared to work toward achieving and maintaining a balance between the quality of life and the quality of the environment."



Raising new leaders

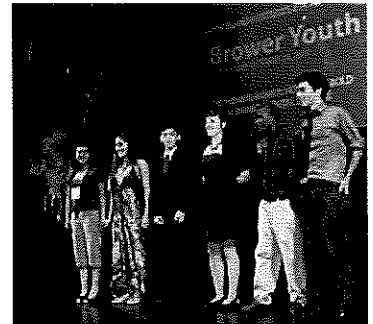
But an increase in youth activism is not enough to stave off environmental peril – we need new ideas and new leaders, according to Eban Goodstein, economics professor at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Ore., and co-director of the 2009 National Teach-In on Global Warming, a nationwide network of teachers at all educational levels that, on Feb. 5, engaged more than a million Americans in a "solutions-driven dialogue."

Eban says the U.S. must act aggressively in the next year or so to reduce global-warming pollution and invest in clean energy technologies or "you guys are going to be looking at a very different world in 2050," when the world will be 3 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit higher.

"To put that number in perspective, during the last Ice Age, it was only nine degrees Fahrenheit colder than it is on average today," he explained.

Goodstein says youth need to move beyond being the front lines of environmental activism to being the visionaries. Both the Brower New Leaders and Canon Envirothon have devoted more than two decades training them to do just that.

Earth Island Initiative was founded in 1982 by renowned environmentalist David Brower to support young people who have new strategies for saving the earth. In 2000, the organization started the Brower Youth Awards, which honor six youth ages 13 to 23 each year for their leadership and activism with a gala ceremony, campout and \$3,000 prize.



"We felt like young people so often are sort of the workhorses of these campaigns and aren't always recognized, aren't always supported at a critical time in the development of their careers, in the development of their activism," Smith said.

The Canon Envirothon also honors young environmentalists in a yearly competition that engages more than 500,000 high school students throughout North America. The Envirothon works in partnership with local conservation districts, forestry associations, educators and natural resource agencies to organize and conduct competitions on the local, regional, and state and/or provincial level. This year's hands-on problem-solving competition is Aug. 2-6 at the University of North Carolina at Asheville, where local finalists will compete for recognition, scholarships, and prizes.

Issues addressed

While recycling clubs abound at all age levels, more and more youth are expanding their efforts in other directions. In Massachusetts, young people involved in Gardening in the Community promote organic gardening and bicycle use. In Florida, a young man developed an interactive curriculum to educate youth about the plight of loggerhead turtles. In California, youth helped pass a bill requiring cosmetic companies to alert the Department of Health if their products contain carcinogens.

These are just a few examples. Youth across the country are cleaning up local wetlands, shutting down toxic waste sites, promoting clean energy and combating landfills. They have educated their peers, parents and the public on carbon emissions, reusable goods and conservation of resources.

Brower New Leaders have dealt with many such issues, and the Earth Island Institute currently oversees 60 projects, ranging from "Project Coyote" to the "Sacred Land Film Project," in 26 countries worldwide.

Students involved in Canon Envirothon pay special attention to natural resources, specifically those related to soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry and wildlife.

"Conservation is the big thing that we're involved in," Burns said, explaining that such work is more grassroots, and thus a more viable venue for youth activism.



And while most youth activism is local, many are entering the political realm to effect long-lasting change.

"There's a recognition that this is a time when we need major action from government if we're going to sort of lay the foundation and give you guys the tools that you're going to need to transform the world," Goodstein said.

New worldview coming?

Goodstein envisions a day soon when people automatically think about the environmental impact of their actions before they act. "We'll move on to a phase where we just sort of naturally mimic nature and create things that are in harmony with nature and don't produce waste and pollution."

Smith shares his optimism because she's seen the changes enacted by the youth involved in her program. "Just this year we were looking at the past 10 years of awardees, and at least 87 percent of our award recipients are still in leadership roles in the environmental movement. So it's a great sign that these young folks were committed when they applied to do this work and that hopefully the support we provided ensured they could stay committed and rise as leaders," she said.

The presidency of Barack Obama gives more reasons for hope. "It's rejuvenated the environmental movement in a number of ways," Smith said. "People have been really hitting their heads against the wall for eight years trying to push forward environmental initiatives."



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