

# Young Champions of the Earth Celebrated with Award Sponsored by Covestro

During the United Nations Environment General Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya in December, six young people from across the globe were honored as the first-ever Young Champions of the Earth by UN Environment for their outstanding ideas on environmental protection. The new award is sponsored by Covestro, a leading manufacturer of materials for sustainable development.

The Young Champions of the Earth awards are given to individuals between the ages of 18 and 30 who offer novel solutions to today's pressing environmental challenges. Each winner (listed below) received US\$15,000 in seed funding, expert mentoring, needs-based training and access to powerful networks to help them implement their plans over the coming year. Twenty-nine-year-old Kaya Dorey was selected as the Young Champion for North America, in recognition of her sustainable apparel business, NOVEL SUPPLY CO.

Dorey and the other winners received their prizes at a gala event where they were addressed by UN Environment Head Erik Solheim and singer/songwriter Ellie Goulding, who was appointed by UN Environment as a Global Goodwill Ambassador for her environmental and social justice activism. The master of ceremonies was model, actor and film producer Dia Mirza, UN Environment's Goodwill Ambassador for India who has been recognized for her contribution to environment conservation.

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Richard Northcote, Covestro chief sustainability officer, told the assembly that the success of the first Young Champions of the Earth competition meant Covestro would continue to support the UN Environment initiative. “As one of the world's leading contributors of materials for sustainable development, it was an easy decision for Covestro to partner with UN Environment to inspire and motivate young people across the world to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and help tackle some of the complex social and environmental challenges we all face,” said Northcote.

His colleague Rebecca Lucore, head of corporate social responsibility and sustainability for Covestro in North America, added “We are helping to foster young, innovative eco-entrepreneurs who are committed to the three Ps — people, planet, prosperity — and are translating the global SDGs into local action in regions around the world.”



From left to right: Young Champions Adam Dixon, Eritai Kateibwi, Omer Badokhon and Liliana Jaramillo Pazmiño; singer/songwriter and UN Environment Global Goodwill Ambassador Ellie Goulding; Young Champions Kaya Dorey and Mariama Mamane; and Richard Northcote, Covestro chief sustainability officer.

“Young Champions are living proof that amid today's environmental and economic crises, there are incredible opportunities for innovative solutions, fresh approaches and inspirational leadership. This is a fantastic partnership founded on a shared passion for empowering aspiring change-makers,” said Solheim, underlining both partners' commitment to support young talents in implementing their bright ideas.

The Young Champions of the Earth for 2017, selected for their outstanding potential to create positive environmental impact, are as follows:

North America – Kaya Dorey received the honor for a closed-loop apparel manufacturing hub.

Europe – Adam Dixon received the honor for work with phytoaponics: a hydroponic growing system for the commercial greenhouse.

Latin America and the Caribbean – Liliana Jaramillo Pazmiño received the honor for work with native plants for green roofs in Quito.

West Asia – Omer Badokhon received the honor for work with biogas for all: improving rural livelihoods with sustainable energy.

Africa – Mariama Mamane received the honor for work with innovative eco-management of water hyacinth.

Asia Pacific – Eritai Kateibwi received the honor for work with the Te Maeu Project, a modular hydroponics food-growing system for Pacific islands.

Details of their winning submissions are available on the Young Champions section of the UN Environment website at [www.unep.org/youngchampions](http://www.unep.org/youngchampions). [www.covestro.us](http://www.covestro.us).