

17 Young Social Entrepreneurs Who Are Making the World a Better Place

Source: ecowatch.com

Published: June 1, 2016



[Guest Contributor](#)

By Conscious Company Magazine

Conscious Company Magazine partnered with leading accelerators, incubators and educational institutions to identify 17 rising entrepreneurs who see things differently, are shaking the tree, disrupting industries, making money and doing good. These individuals are bold. They're young. They're fearless. And they are the face of the up-and-coming generation of change makers willing to risk it all to make the world a better place.

Angaza LTD. – Maria Mayanja, Co-Founder

ANGAZA



- Founded: 2012
- Location: Kigali, Rwanda
- Industry: Ethical Fashion

For Upcycling Non-Biodegradable Waste Into Accessories

At Angaza Ltd., Maria and her team upcycle Kigali's non-biodegradable waste into [fashion](#) accessories such as bags, wallets and gadget covers, creating green jobs along the way. The team is also revolutionizing the way environmental issues are taught in schools in Rwanda by engaging students in fun, hands-on activities such as tree planting, competitions and upcycling to engender a more conscious generation of Africans rooted in sustainable practices.

"I am passionate about environmental conservation and want to help people understand it better in a 'non-rocket science' kind of way."

Because International – Kenton Lee, Founder



- Founded: 2009
- Location: Nampa, ID
- Industry: Ethical Footwear

For Creating a Shoe That Kids Won't Outgrow

Over two billion people have some kind of soil-transmitted disease. More than 300 million kids do not have shoes—and countless more have shoes that do not fit. When kids have shoes that fit, they can stay healthy and continue to go to school, help their families and communities and have as many chances to succeed as possible. Kenton and the team at Because International have created The Shoe That Grows—a shoe that can adjust and expand five sizes and last up to five years—to address this problem. The team distributes shoes to kids worldwide, providing a pair of shoes that fits year after year.

“The mission of my life is to put other people in the best possible position to succeed and I absolutely love doing this for kids around the world. I am constantly inspired as I listen to those living in extreme poverty to hear their thoughts, ideas and dreams for how their daily lives can be improved.”

www.becauseinternational.org | www.theshoethatgrows.org | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/becauseinternational) | [twitter](https://twitter.com/becauseinternational)

Ecoprise – Bhuwan K.C., Founder and CEO



Bhuwan K.C.



- Founded: 2012
- Location: Nepal
- Industry: Clean Energy

For Providing Clean Energy to Base-of-the-Pyramid Communities

Through Ecoprise, Bhuwan and his team provide [clean energy](#) solutions to base-of-pyramid communities in Nepal to create economic, environmental and social benefits. The company's model is based on appropriate technology design, shared distribution channels and specific knowledge-transfer processes. The company works with banks, co-ops and self-help groups to develop financing programs that increase affordability and incorporate a support package that includes credit, marketing, sales materials and business skills training.

“Through my work at Ecoprise, we improve the lives of millions of Nepalis who face energy poverty and would not have knowledge and access to these solutions if we did not exist.”

www.meroecoprise.org | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)

EZBZ Inc. – Shana Schlossberg



- Founded: 2011
- Location: New York City
- Industry: Internet Marketplace

For Connecting Consumers With Local Businesses

Shana and the folks at myEZBZ.com directly connect consumers with local businesses through an online concierge service. Using proprietary technology that can match any consumer request with related local businesses in minutes, the website presents a consumer with all reputable local businesses at the same time and creates a level playing field where large and small companies have the same opportunity to win the consumer's business. A business cannot pay more to receive an advantage and the consumer is able to support local businesses instead of the larger corporations that usually dominate first-page results on most other search platforms.

"I have been working with local businesses for over 15 years and always felt that marketing platforms work against them instead of for them. I wanted to create a platform that facilitated connections between consumers and businesses in a fair and honest way."

www.myEZBZ.com | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)

Green Monday – David Yeung, Co-Founder and CEO

green
monday



David Yeung



- Founded: 2012
- Location: Hong Kong, China and U.S.
- Industry: Food

For Creating a Platform to Get a Country to “Go Green”

David Yeung and Green Monday are on a mission to combat [climate change](#) and global food insecurity. Using a plant-based diet as an entry point to promote a low-carbon, healthy and sustainable lifestyle, the group has created a platform that enables businesses, schools and individuals to make green behavior happen. The platform is built upon both a social pillar and a venture pillar. The social side drives advocacy campaigns to raise awareness and demand for a green lifestyle, while the venture side takes an active role in the market to increase the supply of green choices by way of impact investing, corporate consulting and food retail and distribution.

“Our planet is sick, people's health is suffering and animals are subject to unimaginable cruelty. As a long-time vegetarian, I know that if we can mobilize a collective shift to a more plant-based diet, all these environmental and social problems can be much alleviated.”

www.greenmonday.org | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)

[Read page 1](#)

Koe Koe Tech – Michael Lwin & Dr. Yar Zar Min Htoo



- Founded: 2013
- Location: Yangon, Myanmar
- Industry: IT, Healthcare

For Making Healthcare More Accessible

In Myanmar, eight children die every hour. Thirty-two million people suffer from infectious diseases such as malaria, dengue, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. Eighteen million people suffer from hypertension. Dr. Yar Zar Min Htoo, co-founder of Koe Koe Tech, contracted Hepatitis B from a rural doctor who reuses dirty needles. As a result, Yar Zar Min Htoo and his cousin Michael Lwin developed Koe Koe Tech. With just a phone and the company's mobile health apps, a rural person in Myanmar can gain access to Population Services International-generated information in 32 health categories; the ability to teleconsult with quality doctors (who use clean needles), rural health workers and midwives; and the ability to purchase high-quality, lower-cost health products.

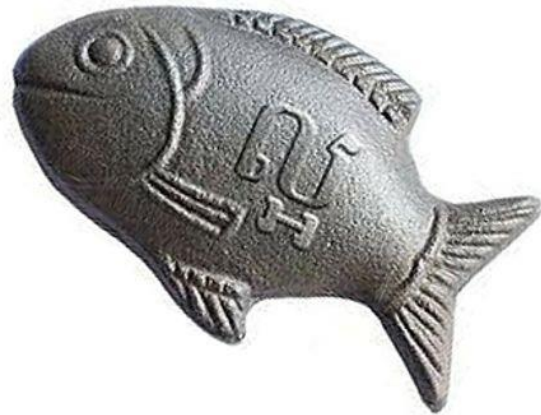
“As a Myanmar-American who lived a comfortable, healthy, relatively easy life in comparison to my co-founder, I feel that it is fundamentally unjust that one's life outcomes are largely predicted by luck—luck of geographic location of birth, luck of the socioeconomic status of the family one is born into, luck of one's ethnic, gender and national identity.” – Michael Lwin

www.koekoetech.com

Lucky Iron Fish – Gavin Armstrong, Founder and President



LUCKY IRON FISH™



- Founded: 2012
- Location: Guelph, Ontario and Cambodia
- Industry: Natural Health

For Creating a Simple Solution to Combat Iron Deficiency

[Iron deficiency](#) is the world's most common micronutrient issue, negatively impacting the lives of half of the world's population, mainly women and children in developing countries. Gavin and the folks at Lucky Iron Fish have developed a simple solution to combat iron deficiency in Cambodia and beyond. The Lucky Iron Fish is a simple at-home fortification tool. Boiling the company's product for ten minutes as a part of food preparation can release^[1]_{SEP} up to 90 percent of a person's daily required iron intake. The product can be re-used for up to five years and only costs around \$5. It is shaped like a fish—a symbol of luck in Cambodia.

“We are committed to being a true social enterprise with a positive social attribute in every aspect of how we do business and it is my hope that we can prove that social enterprises are not a fad but the future of business.”

www.luckyironfish.com | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)

MiiR – Bryan Pape, Founder and CEO



- Founded: 2010
- Location: Seattle
- Industry: Adventure and Lifestyle Products

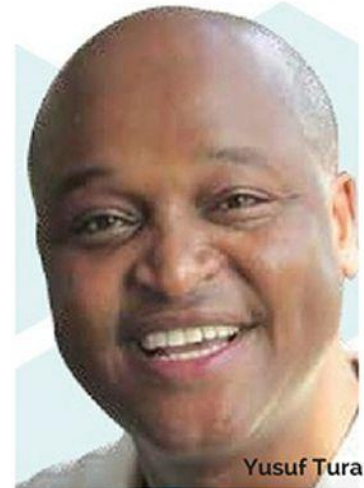
For Creating Activewear That Truly Gives Back

Bryan and his team at MiiR inspire and empower through amazing design and transparent giving. The company's line of bottles (water bottles, growlers and tumblers) directly facilitates clean water projects, its line of bags gives to educational initiatives and its line of bikes gives bikes to those in need in developing countries.

“We believe in good design and that products should be functional and beautiful and also believe companies have the unique ability to change the world for the better.”

www.miiR.com | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)

Obamastove SPC. – Yusuf Tura, Founder



- Founded: 2007
- Location: Ethiopia
- Industry: Cookstoves

For Designing An Affordable Cookstove

An estimated three billion people regularly breathe in poisonous smoke from open fire cooking. It is becoming one of the world's most pressing health and environmental problems, [killing more than four million people each year](#), according to the World Health Organization. Yusuf Tura^[1] is tackling this problem head-on through his company Obamastove, a designer, manufacturer and distributor^[2] of locally made, low-cost cookstoves. In addition to cookstoves, Obamastove also manufactures improved briquettes, which are custom-made to fit inside its Obamastoves. The company has made, sold and delivered more than 250,000 stoves, each costing less than \$10 and the product is now the top-selling stove in Ethiopia.

"The stove saves lives and the environment and creates green jobs for extremely poor communities. I am most inspired by the team that I work with and the villagers we serve who are living on less than \$1 per day."

www.obamastove.com

Regrained – Jordan Schwartz & Dan Kurzrock



- Founded: 2012
- Location: San Francisco
- Industry: Packaged Food

For Turning "Waste" From Breweries Into Healthy Food

Craft beer is booming and with ^[L]_[SEP]it, so is food waste. Eighty-five percent of brewing's by product^[L]_[SEP] is grain—more than six billion pounds annually. Breweries extract sugars as a liquid and the physical grain that is left behind with its protein and fiber is considered "waste." Yet, this grain can offer the food system a sustainable source of nutrition. Dan and Jordan teamed up to create ReGrained to upcycle this grain and close the loop by turning it into delicious food, like granola bars.

"We are inspired^[L]_[SEP] by the potential to find the sweet spot between profit and purpose by creating win-wins for our customers, partners, community and planet." — Jordan Schwartz

"We see our work as an opportunity to use entrepreneurship as a means of creating a more sustainable urban economy—simultaneously upcycling 'waste' and feeding people." — Dan Kurzrock

www.regrained.com | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)

[Read page 1](#)

Resonate – Ayla Schlosser & Solange Impanoyimana



- Founded: 2013
- Location: Rwanda & East Africa
- Industry: Women's Rights & International Development

For Empowering Women to Become Leaders in Their Communities

Resonate provides experiential leadership training to women and girls in Rwanda and throughout East Africa in order to support and unite them to lead change in their communities. Gender inequality inhibits the growth and development of communities both locally and globally. By coaching women to become leaders, Resonate unleashes their self-confidence, strength and power to lead positive growth in their communities.

"I want to live in a world where every little girl can be or do anything she dreams up—Resonate is building that dream into a reality." — Ayla

"Every day I get to witness the transformation of the women we work with—women like Francine, who was previously unable to live up to her dream to be a leader and who now conducts monthly meetings to solve problems in her community—and that gives me hope for a better future." — Solange Impanoyimana

www.resonateworkshops.org | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)

Shea Yeleen – Rahama Wright, CEO and Founder



- Founded: 2005
- Location: Washington, DC and Ghana
- Industry: Beauty and Agri-business

For Employing Women Through Shea Butter

The motto of Shea Yeleen is Transform your Skin, Transform a Community. For the last decade, Rahama and the Shea Yeleen team have committed their efforts to supporting economic empowerment of women producers of shea butter in rural Ghana. The company helps Ghanaian women bring high-quality organic shea butter products to the global marketplace while providing them with a source of living wages. Through the business model that Rahama has developed, shea trees are protected from being cut down, consumers have access to healthy and natural bodycare products and women are financially and emotionally empowered.

“I want to live in a world where women everywhere have the financial stability to care for themselves and their families. Each time I visit the shea cooperative and hear a story from a woman who was able to save money or send her child to school, it keeps me going.”

www.sheayeleen.com | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)

Tonle – Rachel Faller, Founder and Creative Director



- Founded: 2013
- Location: Producing products in Cambodia, selling internationally in 15 countries
- Industry: Ethical Fashion

For Turning Garment Waste Into Clothes

The garment industry is the world's second largest polluter, throwing away about half of what it produces (approximately 50 million tons) in wasteful manufacturing. Imagine if we could cut this pollution in half just by wasting less. Rachel and her team at Tonlé are on a mission to prove that that's possible. Using remnants discarded by large manufacturers, the company produces beautiful, comfortable garments and uses every scrap, creating zero waste in the process. In one year, Rachel and her team have saved 22,000 lbs of textiles, 70 tons of CO₂, 450 lbs of pesticides and 46,296,600 gallons of water. And they're just getting started.

"It's hard to say whether the environmental significance of what we're doing or the positive changes in people's lives that we see through our work is more important to me, because at the end of the day how we treat the planet is destroying people's lives today—and we have to do something about that."

www.tonle.design.com | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/tonle) | [twitter](https://twitter.com/tonle)

4P Foods – Tom McDougall, Founder



- Founded: 2014
- Location: Virginia, Maryland and Washington, DC
- Industry: Local Food

For Bringing Healthy Food to Food Deserts

Tom and the good people at 4P Foods are working to fix the broken food system by bridging the gap between small family farms that use sustainable practices and those who want^[SEP] to support them. The company also uses the power of that community to get good, healthy food into the food deserts that need it most—those that bear a disproportionate burden of the externalized costs of industrial food production. In a sense, Tom and his team are delivering food from good people to good people and, perhaps more importantly, using food as a tool for social justice.

“Our farmers, our members, our team, our partners—as individuals they are all amazing, but the change that is possible when they are all working towards the same vision is humbling, inspiring and powerful.”

www.4pfoods.com | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)
