

Enya Fang

First Prize Winner – 5-8 category

Topic: Stella Bowles

A young Nova Scotia environmental activist found her voice at the age of 11 when she ascertained the narrow stream running along the edge of her home, the LaHave River, was heavily contaminated. Sewage and bacteria-adulterated, it was too excessively tainted to swim in. Triggering the topic of fecal bacteria, Stella Bowles converted her grade 6 science project towards an environmental solution for a global issue.

Bowles perceived that over 600 sewage pipes were illegally dumping raw waste into the river, spreading fecal bacteria to marine species, further tarnishing aquatic habitats. Her results on Facebook went viral in days, reaching policymakers from all three levels. In response, the Canadian Government formally pledged 15.7 million dollars regarding the purification of the LaHave River, diverting 100 sewage pipes per year until 2023.

Besides advocating to end water pollution, Stella is among the numerous “Climate strike” teen activists, led by Sweden’s esteemed Greta Thunberg, on an international trek to resolve climate change. Bowles states, “It’s not about age. We only have one earth, and it’s our generation that’s going to be left with a huge disaster, so we might as well start now.” in an interview with The Chronicle Herald.

During the summer of 2019, Global News Canada reached out to Stella, internationally documenting her mission. Presently, she's featured at an exhibit at Halifax’s Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. In addition, Bowles is the honored recipient of Ontario’s Science Center’s “2019 Youth Innovation award”, one of her multiple accomplishments. Currently, she’s devoted to educating Nova Scotia’s youth on the importance of preserving and assisting nature on our planet, namely testing waterways. To conclude, Stella Bowles is a young Canadian leader driving initiatives that impact the health of our society.