

DC Metro Teen Leads Environmental Education, Equity in USA and Indonesia

Mei Torrey is a high school junior, yet her achievements in sustainability and research read like she's been an environmental champion and educator for decades.

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 16, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Publishing academic research on microplastic pollution and its impact on underprivileged communities while surpassing the typical efforts of many seasoned environmental activists is an unconventional pursuit for most high school juniors.

Mei Torrey is doing just that and partnering with international nonprofits for global benefit. This level of dedication is surprising for any youth, yet it hardly hints at what Mei has already accomplished. Her recent research and education efforts around environmental equity, particularly in microplastics, have made her a powerful

change agent in two countries. Based in the Washington DC Metro area of USA, Mei's efforts stretch to Indonesia. She takes a modest view, saying it's just "part of who I am." Mei's passionate vision for a greener earth was triggered by a shocking scene in 2019. While Facetiming with a friend who'd moved to Bali, she saw something in the background that changed her. Mei explains:

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We're fighting toward a greener earth for everyone!"
Mei Torrey

"His tiny face barely breaks the murky water's surface as his little limbs navigate through the cocktail of plastic bottles, styrofoam, and other debris. His head occasionally sinks underneath floating objects before coming up for air.

The boy is only 10 or 11 years old, swimming in a river so polluted the water has turned dark; green and gray. That night, I couldn't sleep as I kept seeing the boy's face over and over in my



Mei Torrey volunteering with Potomac Conservancy

mind, wondering how the river had become so polluted and if he would fall sick... I felt privileged and guilty as I wheeled my trash can, filled with packaging waste and water bottles, to the end of the driveway, contemplating whether I was contributing to the plastic crisis in Bali. I knew I had to do something." – Mei Torrey

Mei dug into environmental data, discovering microplastic pollution and its disproportionate effect on underprivileged populations. She located and partnered with the non-profit organization [BASAbali](#), based in Washington D.C. that promotes environmental advocacy in Indonesia. Mei began volunteering, inspiring local Washington DC youth to reduce plastic pollution while organizing clean-ups, entering her student team at Langley High School in Virginia into global environmental competitions, mentoring junior members, and receiving awards. She was just getting started. Mei co-authored and published a children's book about a superhero who fights for our environment, and then used the book as a teaching tool, delivering educational seminars to hundreds of students and teachers.

Mei's progressive undergraduate-level research on microplastic pollution, under the advisement of Dr. James Truncer at Harvard University's Extension, led to the publication of an abridged version of her 51-page white paper. The March 2023 edition of the Horizon Academic Research Journal contains Mei's microplastic pollution research. Her accomplishments and blog articles suggest an advanced grasp of globally complex environmental and humanitarian issues. Mei's passion and conviction are inspiring. As [Newsbreak](#) reported in April 2023, Mei plans to continue studying microplastics and working toward environmental sustainability at University.

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