

# Reward for young green thinkers

Students receive all-expenses-paid study trip to Germany for their environmental projects



**Little big winner:** Bayer managing director Thomas Steffen presenting 12-year-old Xin Ying with her plaque. She also received RM3,000 in cash. **Inset:** Closer look of her winning artwork.



**S**TUDENT Chia Wen Shin has been collecting used cooking oil from her neighbours to make dishwashing soap.

She then gives the soap to those who contributed their used cooking oil or sells it to the public.

Chia, 22, has even set up a company, Green Yards, to expand the project further.

The Universiti Putra Malaysia student is one of two winners who will receive an all-expenses-paid environmental study trip to Germany in November this year under the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Programme, which is now in its eighth year in Malaysia.

Under the programme, the young envoys create projects which will have a positive environmental impact within the local community.

Chia, along with 11 other university students, were conferred the title "Bayer Young Environmental Envoy" at an award presentation ceremony held on Sept 23.

They were honoured for making a difference through their individual environmental projects.

Chia's winning project was aimed at highlighting the danger of discarding used cooking oil which ends up clogging drains, the root cause of flashfloods, as well as polluting rivers, a main source of water to millions of Malaysians.

Joining Chia in the week-long study trip to Germany is Loh Hong Khai, from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.

Loh won over the panel of judges with his project named HopON – a carpooling community set up to help cut down the number of cars on the road, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and alleviate the shortage of parking lots and public transport problems on campus.

Loh's initiative provides students at Utar's

Setapak campus an option to carpool to and from the university.

There are plans to include a mobile application that allows wider usage, both commercially and to other faculties.

Chia and Loh were selected by a panel of distinguished judges based on the impact and sustainability of the environmental projects they presented.

While in Germany, they will join some 50 young environmentalists from 18 countries to experience first-hand how environmental protection is practised in Germany.

At the same event, Bayer also honoured 14 young children, from the ages of 7 to 14 for their outstanding achievements as the national winners of the 22nd International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment. Lim Xin Ying, 12, from Penang emerged as the top national winner and received RM3,000 in cash and other prizes.

Children from all over the world were invited to draw their ideas on environmental protection in important areas of life. The contest drew participation from more than 3,800 children on the theme, "Water: Source of Life. Where does it come from?"

Both the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy programme and International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment are part of the partnership projects of Bayer with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the area of youth and the environment.

The partners' joint aim is to support young people in their commitment to the environment, to expand their knowledge of the environment and to foster the global exchange of experience by building networks. For this purpose, Bayer and UNEP organise a dozen environmental projects for children and young people around the world every year.