

JCI United Kingdom
Press Release
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JCI UK names Ten Outstanding Young Persons of 2017

Every year JCI United Kingdom (JCI UK) searches for the ten people in the UK who represent the outstanding achievements of young leaders.

JCI members from across the country work with their local chambers to identify incredible young leaders who are proving that regardless of age, young people can do amazing things when they apply themselves.

The ten honourees have been chosen and include a self-taught palaeontologist, innovative entrepreneurs and advocates for minorities. All the winners have achieved something exceptional in their chosen fields, are making an impact in their communities and striving to make the world a better place.

National President of JCI UK, Michael Steel, says *“JCI UK is the organisation that develops, promotes and celebrates the achievements of young leaders across our nation and in our local communities. We are therefore delighted to have once again run the JCI TOYP programme on a national level to have sought out some of the UK’s most inspiring young leaders who have accomplished some truly extraordinary things”*.

The winners collected their awards on Friday 24 November at the TOYP Awards Ceremony which took place at the Grand Harbour Hotel in Southampton as part of the JCI UK National Convention 2017.

The winners will go on to represent the UK in the international TOYP competition in 2018.

The 2017 UK TOYP Honourees are:

- **Ruth Daniel (Cultural Achievement)** - Ruth is CEO and Artistic Director of multi-award winning organisation, In Place of War (IPOW) and uses the power of art and cultural expression in troubled societies to bring communities together
- **Olivia Higgs (Business/Economic/Entrepreneurial Accomplishment)** – Olivia is the co-founder of KOMPAS, a mobile application that acts as users’ pocket guide to the world’s urban jungles by providing localised, tailored recommendations to support global travellers.
- **Zoe Jackson MBE (Cultural Achievement)** – Zoe set up the Living the Dream Performing Arts Company at the age of 16. The company aims to empower and inspire young people to grow in talent, self-confidence and believe in their futures. She has organised flash-mobs, has been instrumental in supporting national campaigns and initiatives, is a motivational speaker, and has performed at many major venues, including for the queen.
- **Melissa Johns (Contribution to Children/World Peace/Human Rights)** – has cofounded multiple organisations which promote and development the contributions of people with disabilities in the media and entertainment industry.
- **Sam Jones (Business/Economic/Entrepreneurial Accomplishment)** - Sam Jones is the Managing Director of Manchester based content marketing agency Tunafish Media which he formed in 2011 when he was 22 with no start-up capital. He is also an avid fundraiser, volunteer and charity ambassador.

- **Dean Lomax (Scientific and/or technological development)** – Dean is a self-taught Palaeontologist and has published many journal articles, two books and is working on a PhD at the University of Manchester. He is a strong advocate for communicating science with the public and regularly appears on television, most recently as series advisor and recurring on-screen expert presenter for ITV's *Dinosaur Britain*.
- **Ryan Lisk (Business/Economic/Entrepreneurial Accomplishment)** –after being approached by a struggling start-up to provide legal advice whilst at university, Ryan set up his own firm providing fixed fee services to young start-ups, disrupting the legal industry with an innovative model of working.
- **Aaron Phipps (Personal Improvement and/or Accomplishment)** – At the age of 15, Aaron contracted meningitis C and meningococcal septicaemia (blood poisoning) and had to have both legs and most of his fingers amputated. Since then he has gone on to compete in numerous sporting events, including the 2012 London Paralympic games and has raised vital funds for charity.
- **Lilian Seenoi (Humanitarian and/or Voluntary Leadership)** - Lilian has worked as a human rights defender for over 20 years. Working with vulnerable communities and groups, she has run campaigns supporting the rights of tribal groups and refugees in times of conflict.
- **Michelle Shavdia (Business/Economic/Entrepreneurial Accomplishment)** – Having struggled with mental health problems when she lost her father to cancer at the age of 14, Michelle wanted to help other young people going through the same thing. After winning various grants, she launched her own social enterprise providing coaching to those experiencing mental health challenges

These ten honourees are all working to create a better world, using the passion and enthusiasm present in all young people, in order to create sustainable change. They are a symbol for all who dream of building their own futures and working together to solve the problems we faced.

Should you know of anyone in your local community who is delivering amazing work in the following domains, why not nominate them to your local chamber and ensure recognition in 2018:

- Business, economic, and/or entrepreneurial accomplishment
- Political, legal, and/or governmental affairs
- Academic leadership and/or accomplishment
- Cultural achievement
- Moral and/or environmental leadership
- Contribution to children, world peace, and/or human rights
- Humanitarian and/or voluntary leadership
- Scientific and/or technological development
- Personal improvement and/or accomplishment
- Medical innovation

Nominees must be between 18 and 40.

For further information on this years honourees and their achievements, please visit www.jciuk.org.uk

About JCI:

Junior Chamber International (JCI) is a global not-for-profit organisation for 18 to 40 year olds, run by its members for its members. JCI's mission is to "provide development opportunities that empower young people to create positive change". The JCI movement began in 2015 in St Louis, USA and JCI is now present in over 100 countries around the world.

JCI UK was established in 1928 and was one of the first national organisations formed outside of the USA. It has over 20 local branches, known as chambers, operating in towns and cities in England and Northern Ireland.

About TOYP:

JCI's Ten Outstanding Young Persons of the World (TOYP) programme serves to recognise young people who excel in their chosen fields, creating positive change in their communities and across the globe. The international programme has been running since 1983 and past winners include Anthony Robbins, Jackie Chan and Queen Rania of Jordan.

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