

# TRUROBOTICS win "Innovator of the Year"

By Maurice Rees

A group of youth from Colchester went from having a novel idea to picking up the big prize as Innovator of the Year at the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Mobius Awards of Environmental Excellence held in Halifax on November 9.

TRUROBOTICS, Truro is comprised of several local ten to fourteen years old working under the direction of Milo Crowell, coach.

Mobius Awards of Environmental Excellence is a provincial award ceremony which gives special recognition to individuals, businesses, and organizations who are innovating in an effort to divert waste from landfill. The keynote speaker for the November 9th event was Dr. David Suzuki, award-winning scientist, environmentalist and broadcaster. DivertNS, formerly Resource Recovery Fund Board operates and sponsors the Mobius Award.

The team got their early words of encouragement and total support from Wayne Wamboldt, Director, Colchester Materials Recycling Facility. He worked with the TRUROBOTICS team and encouraged his staff to do several tests of their product in the composting process as his facility.

They are a "First Lego League" community team from Truro. Last year, as part of their Lego team activities, eight team members of TRUROBOTICS noticed a big problem in their community. In speaking with Wayne Wamboldt at the Colchester Balefill Facility, they learned some plastic bags that claim to be 'biodegradable' actually act like regular plastic bags in



The group of 10-14 year olds from the Colchester area and coach Milo Crowell pose for a photo displaying the "innovator of the Year Award" picked up at the 18th Annual Mobius Environmental Awards in Halifax on November 9th. (Submitted)

the compost system, which interferes with equipment and contaminates the soil.

They challenged themselves to develop a truly compostable bag that could be accepted by their local facility. Trurobotics developed a strong, flexible bag that doesn't get caught in machines

and completely decomposes in less than two weeks (with a plastic recipe made in their own kitchen).

In June 2016, they competed for the First Lego League Global Innovation Awards held in Washington DC, and were recognized as one of twenty teams, from

over twenty-eight thousand worldwide. They're in the process of patenting their idea in the US and Canada, and they're working with local experts at Perennia Park Innovation Centre in Bible Hill to continue to refine their idea, and prepare the product for market.



It's a big step forward for a group of 10-14 year olds from Colchester, who are now known as TRUROBOTICS to be on stage in front of hundreds of people to accept the Innovator of the Year award at the DivertNS sponsored 18th Annual Mobius Environmental Awards. They are now in the process of obtaining a Canadian and USA patent on their environmentally disposal plastic bag. (Submitted)

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