



GS Student Ravi Corea Wins \$5,000 Scholarship Essay Contest



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No one could have anticipated the remarkable work that prompted the winning essay of Equibal Labs Blemfree \$5,000 Scholarship Essay Contest. It tells in eloquent detail about one man's extraordinary efforts on behalf of the endangered Sri Lankan elephant and the conservation of other wildlife in his tropical homeland.

Ravi assisting in the rescue of a baby elephant.

"It is with great pride and enormous pleasure that we announce the

winner -- Ravi Corea, who is majoring in Environmental Biology at Columbia University's School of General Studies. Congratulations, Ravi!" says Normajejan Fusco, president of Equibal Labs.

The contest was intended to demonstrate the company's commitment to preserving balance in the environment. "At Equibal Labs, we believe that Nature is the best chemist, and that everything we need for health and beauty can be found in the world around us. That's why the theme of our essay contest was 'Keeping the balance of nature is essential to the future health of the planet. What can one person do to make a difference?'" says Fusco.

In the process of sorting through thousands of submissions, there were many about the need to "reduce, reuse and recycle," a message that seems to have firmly taken root in the public consciousness. There were essays about saving the rainforest and the ozone layer, and statistics about SUVs, landfill maximization and how to save water while brushing your teeth. In a number of essays, environmental reformers like Rachel Carson and Julia Butterfly Hill rubbed shoulders with Mahatma Gandhi and Al Gore.

With every sort of the pile, Ravi's essay kept rising to the top. His winning essay doesn't talk about what one person can do. It talks about what one person has done, specifically what Ravi himself has done out of his own passion and determination.

A native of Sri Lanka, a small island off the east coast of India that has been identified as one of the twenty-five biodiversity hotspots of the world, Ravi came to the U.S. as a young adult. "After years of frustration and disappointment with what I was seeing going on with the degradation of the environment ... I took an initiative in 1995 by establishing the non-profit Sri Lanka Wildlife Conservation Society (www.slwcs.org) to promote a new paradigm for wildlife conservation in Sri Lanka," he explains in his essay. The organization has since received recognition and funding from corporate sponsors with which it has implemented several community-based projects to resolve conflicts that have cost the lives of elephants and humans.

"Though my victories are minor in comparison to the global environmental issues that need to be addresses out there, for the people and the elephants in our project sites, they have made a world of change," Ravi says. "And who said one person cannot make a difference?"

To read Ravi Corea's winning essay, please visit <http://thebodyperfect.com/scholarship-winner-essay.html>.

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