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# A winner for helping poor on his travels

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysian youth advocate Michael Teoh has won the prestigious "Extraordinary Experience" award at the World Youth & Student Travel Awards and Conference, held in Barcelona, Spain, last week.

The 24-year-old from Penang, was picked over nominees from over 100 countries, for the award to honour a young person who has inspired the world through their travel experiences by volunteering or working abroad.

For Teoh, becoming the first Asian to win the award marked a significant milestone not just for him, but for all Malaysians.

Chris Arnold, founder of Smaller Earth, the United Kingdom-based organisation sponsoring Teoh's travels, collected the award on his behalf.

It is the latest in a string of achievements for Teoh, which includes becoming the youngest and only Asian participant to have qualified and won the Smaller Earth's Your Big Year competition last year, after outlasting more

than 45,000 participants from 168 countries.

The win resulted in an all-expenses paid trip for Teoh to help various communities in humanitarian efforts and participate in environmental conservation projects around the world.

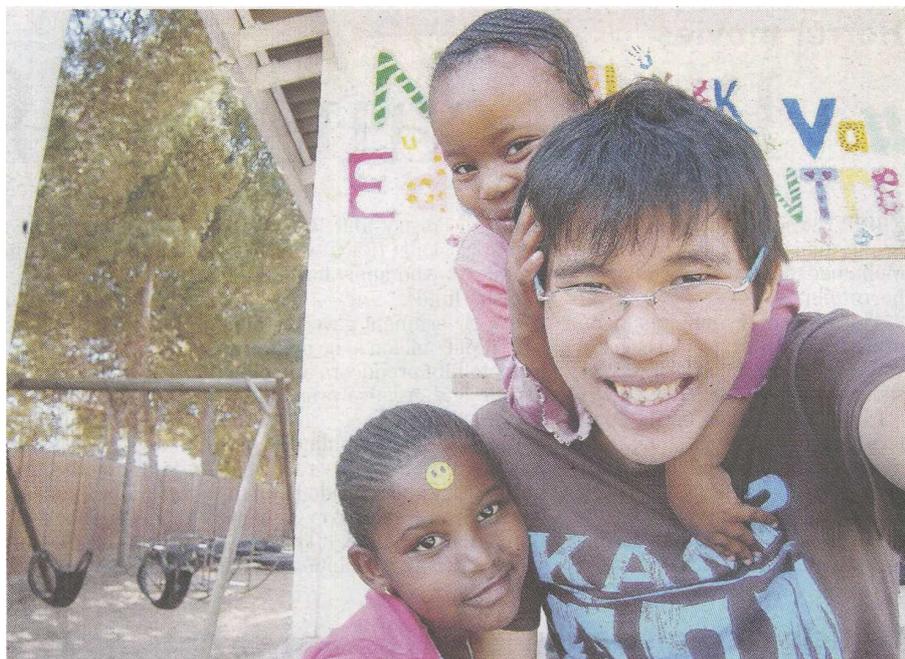
Since January, he has been around the globe helping the poor and homeless and he has met global peace advocates such as Sir Bob Geldof and South African leader Desmond Tutu.

Teoh said during his travels, he had drawn upon Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's call for a more "moderate approach" to global affairs.

He also called on other young Malaysians to join him as a "Global Ambassador" by participating in the Your Big Year 2 ([www.yourbigyear.com](http://www.yourbigyear.com)) challenge.

Teoh is currently in South Africa, volunteering in orphanages and care homes for HIV/AIDS children.

It is the 18th country he has visited on his travels, with more destinations to be added to the list before the end of the year.



Malaysian youth advocate Michael Teoh is currently volunteering at orphanages and care homes for HIV/AIDS children in South Africa.