“We want to change more people’s lives”

TRANSFORMERS: NEXT GENERATION

The up-and-comers shaping the future.

When 24-year-old Iseult Ward found out she had been named as one of Time Magazine’s Leaders of Tomorrow, she was, she says, in shock. Ward co-founded FoodCloud, an app that connects businesses with excess food to the charities that need it. “There is so much surplus, and so much scarcity in resources,” she explained. “We’ve found a solution, and we want every community, business and charity who know they would benefit from this to access this.” But getting started was not without its drawbacks: “Food safety was a huge barrier.” Iseult added, “Someone from a very well know charity advised me to give up, that people had been trying to do this for years. It gave me a level of determination that made me succeed.”

Leanne McDonagh, an artist from Norah’s Traveller Academy told of the personal journey she had taken on the show. “Before that, I had been faced with the attitude that, ‘It’s art, sure what could you do with that?’” Speaking about her experiences of discrimination, Leanne revealed that she had “grown up with the perception that the minute someone knows where I’m from, that someone’s perception changes. Once I left college, I experienced different kinds of discrimination that frustrated me.” But, she added, it also spurred her on. “It was only after being discriminated against that I decided I could use my artwork.”

Rhona Togher, is CEO of Restored Hearing, a company dedicated to getting rid of avoidable hearing damage. “It started out with a young scientist project eight years ago,” she revealed. Since starting, Rhona has changed real lives. “Someone coming up to you saying ‘You give me hope’ is amazing,” she said. “We want to be able to create and invent and change more people’s lives.”

Sinead Burke, AKA blogger Minnie Melange, is a PhD student at Trinity College Dublin. She credits her mother with her can-do attitude. “My mother is the definition of an extraordinary woman, she is strong, she is warm, she is caring, and she is informed.” Of her own skill-set, she says her curiosity is number one. “I’m innately curious. I’m not afraid to ask questions.” Burke would like to see the narrative of women in the media changed. “It can be so stereotypical,” she noted. Through her blog, she hopes to start important conversations like these.

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