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Sahithi Pingali (Courtesy of twitter)

A minor planet somewhere in the Milky Way galaxy, many light years from Earth, will be called Sahithi Pingali.



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The planet is named after the 16 years old Bengaluru schoolgirl, whose concern and work for the city's polluted lakes have earned her this honor.

The planet will be named after her through the Ceres Connection program run by the MIT Lincoln Laboratory and Society for Science and the Public. Less than 15,000 people in the globe possess the honor of having a minor planet named after them.


Pingali's app helps people to easily gather water testing data and understand it. The mobile-based kit works with electronic sensors and test strips to let the user collect physical and chemical parameters of a water sample. The color recognition and mapping software built into the app captures the color of the test strip to indicate the extent of contamination in water. This crowdsourced data is then uploaded onto a cloud platform. She calls it a water health map.

"Over 90% of our lakes are sewage-fed. What makes the issue worse is that there isn't enough monitoring," Pingali told the Economic Times in an email interview.

Pingali has won three special awards in addition to a second prize in the Earth and Environmental Sciences category at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair ISEF at Los Angeles. The awards were given for an app-based system, which she developed to monitor water bodies.

She claims that over 90 percent of our lakes are sewage-fed and this issue is made worse

by the fact that there isn't enough monitoring.  AB Events (<http://abevents.americanbazaaronline.com/>) Inc (<http://abinc.americanbazaaronline.com/>)

Her father, Gopal Pingali, vice president and distinguished engineer at IBM Global Technology Services Labs, said she found mentors on her own, including IISc ecologist TV Ramachandra and Shiv Shankar from Whitefield Rising. “No one in the family has achieved something like this to make the country proud. She’s put our name in the sky,” 

he father said to the Economic Times.

Currently, Pingali is pursuing an internship at the University of Michigan’s Environmental and Water Resources Engineering Centre.