When brother and sister, Rory and Maeve McCracken, who attend Episcopal High School in Baton Rouge, learned of the devastating injuries to animals because of the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, they sprung to action by designing t-shirts and wristbands whose profits help animal rescue efforts led by the Audubon Institute’s Louisiana Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Rescue Program.

The two then founded their nonprofit organization at www.KudosLoveTheGulf.com and published a children’s book, G is for Gulf. After raising over $11,000, speaking to school groups about ways to protect the oceans, and continual efforts to raise awareness in their cause, Rory and Maeve have been awarded $5,000 with the Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes that honors 25 outstanding young leaders nationwide who have made a significant positive difference to people and our planet. “We’ve learned that if you dream it and work really hard, you can make anything happen,” say Rory and Maeve. Parents Andy and Meghan are both scuba divers and have passed along their love of the underwater environment, particularly the Gulf of Mexico, to their two children, who are both certified to dive.

Kudos to these two remarkable students who have inspired us all to improve our lives, planet, and those who share it with us.