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Adya and Gaayatrie receiving awards

The founder of a social enterprise helps people from marginalised communities build their own homes. A volunteer collects books and raises funds to build a primary school's library in Sikkim. Yes, there are a lot of people who do social service, but what is so special about these people? Well, what's special is that 'these people' aren't just any people. They are **Adhya Menda, a tenth grader** and **Gaayatrie Khurrana, a sixth grader**. And for their great deeds, these young girls have been shortlisted for the 8th Annual Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards.

A class X student of Mallya Aditi International School, Bengaluru, Adhya's enterprise, WeRise, aims to solve the housing problem of people who have land, but lack money and knowledge. "WeRise intends to empower the underprivileged section of society by providing them the technical know-how and financial capability to construct eco-friendly, sustainable houses, and also help build a community that propels each individual towards development," says Adhya. Through the initiative, she aims to impact a large number of rural homeless with a sustainable housing programme. "We have already adopted two villages in the Chikkaballapur district and we wish to scale this model up to other districts of Karnataka and also across the states to create positive social change," she says.

Gaayatrie Khurrana, on the other hand, worked with Vinod Nair, a social worker, to build a library for The Vision Academy, a primary school in Yuksom, Sikkim. This sixth grader from **Vidya Niketan School, Bengaluru** tells us how she worked late nights and on weekends on this mission. "I established contacts with children in several buildings in my neighborhood and motivated them to set up teams that spent half an hour every week to help us set up the library. I also make paper bags out of recycled paper and I'm distributing them to vendors regularly. In addition, I have also been making loom bands using recycled rubber bands and bookmarks out of recycled ice-cream sticks, and selling them to family, friends and at community events to collect funds," she says.