



Name: Pamela Nicole Mejia
Age: 28
Nationality: Filipino
Category: Plastic Waste
Project: Making plastic waste fashionable

What is the problem you are trying to solve?

The fashion industry is the second largest polluter in the world. Many consumers are unaware that a large chunk of their wardrobe is essentially plastic. More than 60% of the global fiber market is polyester. One single synthetic garment can release more than 1,900 microfibres per wash. Washing billions of garments every year has a devastating impact on our oceans. The concept of “fast fashion” has encouraged consumers to buy and quickly dispose of their clothes.

How does your idea help solve the problem?

Phinix is a textile recycling center that collects textile wastes and transforms them into higher valued products such as footwear, fashion accessories and lifestyle pieces. We are a fashion social enterprise that aims for the triple bottom line – planet, people and profit.

Clothing production accounts for 10% of global carbon emissions. Recycling 2 million tons of clothing per year is equivalent to taking 1 million cars off the street. We aim to be the be the pioneering facility to recycle textile wastes instead of them being thrown in our landfills.

What inspired you to do this?

As a clothing technology student at the University of the Philippines, my thesis was on social enterprises in the fashion industry. This inspired me to create my own. I had a eureka moment when I was cleaning my closet and I didn't know where to discard my old clothes. I figured I must not be the only one with this problem. The next day, I went to a shoe factory, and asked a shoemaker if they could turn my old brown dress into sandals. This is how Phinix was born.

Bio

At the age of 17, Pamela founded her first fashion business, a t-shirt printing company. She has since founded two more business - an online clothing store and a shoe brand. At present, she is focused on her fashion social enterprise, Phinix, which collects textile waste and turns them into higher valued products such as footwear. She also founded FIBERS, a fashion social enterprise platforms that aims to create a better fashion industry in the ASEAN region.

Pamela has won multiple business competitions in Malaysia, Thailand, Japan and the US. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Clothing Technology from University of the Philippines Diliman and from the YSEALI Social Entrepreneurship Program at Arizona State University.

Links

<https://www.madebyphinix.com/>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7K8Z4vDA7fs&t=217s>,
<https://www.instagram.com/madebyphinix/>