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Gina took her idea to several local paving companies. "They thought I was crazy, a young girl working on such a problem—what's going on?" Gina told *Current Science*. She persisted and finally persuaded one company to concoct experimental quantities of her formula,

which mixes liquid asphalt with stone material and ground-up plastic bottles.

Two years ago, the mayor of Prince George allowed Gina to test her formula, called PolyAggreRoad (PAR), on an uneven stretch of road that is difficult to pave. "After a year, the pavement there usually

Gina Gallant, 17, was named Newsmaker of the Year by a newspaper in her hometown for inventing a new type of paving material made partly from old plastic jugs and bottles.

cracks and potholes form," said Gina.

Two years after being paved with PAR, the road is holding up fine, with no signs of wear. "I'm pretty excited," Gina said.

Gina has patented PAR. She also holds a patent for a bicycle helmet with lights. The small lights—three on the back of the helmet and three on the front—glow when the helmet is worn properly, reassuring the wearer, and any watching parents, that the helmet is in the correct position.

Gina, now 17, is a grade-12 student at Kelly Road Senior Secondary School. She is also the winner of a 2004 Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes. The prize is a \$2,000 scholarship given to "outstanding young leaders who have made a significant positive difference to people and our planet."

Gina plans to put the money toward tuition next fall, when she heads off to college to major in chemistry. In the meantime, she hopes that some paving company will start using PAR. "I'd like to see PAR go all around the world and reduce garbage everywhere," she said. ■