This friendly robot is on our list of the Best Inventions of 2020.

MEET MOXIE
TIME PERSON OF THE YEAR

By Jaime Joyce

Together, President-Elect Joe Biden and Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris have been named TIME’s 2020 Person of the Year. The news was announced on December 10.

“TIME has always had a special connection to the presidency,” editor in chief Edward Felsenthal says. “This is the first time we’ve also named a vice president as Person of the Year.” Harris’s election is historic, as she will be the first woman vice president. “Person of the Year is not just about the year that was,” Felsenthal says, “but about where we’re headed.”

TIME also announced distinctions in four other categories. Guardian of the Year went to two groups. One was frontline health workers. They were recognized for their work protecting people against COVID-19 and caring for those affected by the disease. The other group was racial-justice organizers.

Businessperson of the Year is Eric Yuan, the founder of Zoom; Entertainer of the Year is K-pop group BTS; and Athlete of the Year is LeBron James. Artwork for the TIME cover of James is by 14-year-old Tyler Gordon. He was a TIME Kid of the Year finalist.

Essential workers—“nurses, doctors, delivery people, grocery-store employees, and many others who continue to risk their lives on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic,” according to TIME—won TIME’s Person of the Year Reader Poll.

Stop and Think!

WHY does TIME pick a Person of the Year? Why does it also have a readers’ poll? Are you surprised that the results of the two are different? Explain.
PREHISTORIC PAINTINGS

British and Colombian archaeologists have discovered a large display of ancient rock art. It’s on cliff faces in the Colombian Amazon rainforest. The drawings were probably created 12,500 years ago. They provide further proof that the rainforest’s earliest inhabitants lived alongside Ice Age animals. The archaeologists made this discovery in 2019. But they kept it secret until now, ahead of the rock art’s debut in an upcoming documentary.

FROM OUR READERS . . .

My hero is my Aunt Julia. She is a nurse. During the pandemic, she’s been taking care of patients with COVID-19. She was not able to see her parents, nieces, and nephews for a long time because she chose to help others, selflessly.

I am proud that my parents are both frontline workers. But at the same time, I am worried, because the hospitals are filling up again with people that have the coronavirus.

Mr. Josh, my neighbor, is my hero. He is a firefighter. Even though he has a chance of getting sick from going to so many houses, he still does it to help people. He is courageous and a hero.

FELICITY NORTH, 11
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, NJ

RAJ ISIGUZO, 10
SAN ANTONIO, TX

ELLIE REMSBURG, 11
WEST GROVE, PA

Write to us at tfkeditors@time.com to share your thoughts and ideas.
Each year, TIME for Kids picks the coolest and most helpful new inventions. Kid of the Year Gitanjali Rao, 15, is an inventor. This year, we let her take the lead. Gitanjali selected these items from TIME’s list of the 100 Best Inventions of 2020. Read what she has to say below.

Our generation is seeing problems that have never existed before, in addition to serious long-standing issues. We need to innovate, generate new ideas, and build on them in order to have a meaningful impact on the future. We want a sustainable world. Young people will play a significant role in getting us there. So let’s change the old ways. I hope the inventions on this list will inspire you to come up with solutions of your own.

—By Gitanjali Rao

ULTIMATE INDOOR GARDEN

Eating a salad is more satisfying when you harvest the greens yourself. Want to grow a garden but don’t have a backyard? Consider a GARDYN. This vertical indoor-growing system is powered by artificial intelligence. It lets you choose from 32 plants, including fruits, vegetables, greens, herbs, and flowers that will appear right in your home. Load the seedpods into Gardyn. Then an app monitors variables. These include light and humidity. Cameras let you know when your crops are ready to harvest.

—By Marjorie Korn

FOLLOWING THE CONVERSATION

Robotics might be the answer to making virtual classes feel more human. The MEETING OWL PRO is a 360° tabletop camera. It shifts its lens and microphone to whoever is speaking. In “hybrid” classes and meetings, virtual participants will have a better feel for what’s happening in the room. “It’s able to follow the conversation,” says Owl Labs cofounder Max Makeev. To date, Owl Labs products are used by more than 50,000 companies and universities, as well as K–12 schools across the United States.

—By Jesse Will
High-Tech Tutor

Robots have always fascinated Van Robotics CEO Laura Boccanfuso. But she felt most were too expensive and technical for real-life use. So she developed ABII. It’s a robot tutor that helps kids learn math and reading. Many students are learning from home because of the coronavirus pandemic.

“Schools more than ever need individualized learning help,” Boccanfuso says. ABII comes with lessons created by teachers. It uses a camera to detect changes in a student’s attention. Then it adjusts its approach for individual learners.

—By Nadia Suleman

Portable Purifier

“When people want clean water, they reach for plastic bottles,” says CRAZYCAP CEO Rakesh Guduru. For those who want a more sustainable way to hydrate on the go, Guduru created a bottle cap. It uses cleansing UV light to sanitize water in just 60 seconds. The device has two settings. One purifies water from taps or public fountains. The other purifies water from streams and ponds—perfect for hikers and campers. The cap is rechargeable and compatible with many reusable bottles.

—By Simmone Shah

Taking Notes

In 2013, Magnus Wanberg noticed his colleagues taking notes on paper instead of on laptops and phones. “Why hasn’t anyone replaced paper with technology?” he wondered. This led him to make the reMarkable paper tablet. The note-taking device converts handwriting into digital text. Released in 2016, its thin design mimics paper. Now, Wanberg has made the REMARKABLE 2. At less than a quarter-inch thick, the device is 30% skinnier than the original. Its battery can go two weeks per charge.

—By Mariah Espada
This friendly robot is designed to boost empathy and social skills. It’s for kids ages 5 to 10. **MOXIE** was created by experts in education and child development. Between them, they have worked on the TV show *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood*, for Pixar, and for the Jim Henson Company. In Moxie, you’ll find a compassionate pal who encourages reading and drawing. The robot sends kids on missions, such as writing kind notes to family members or talking about feelings with a friend.

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**HELPFUL HEADSET**

**ALTEREGO**, designed by researchers at the MIT Media Lab, seems to read your mind! The headset lets you communicate with a computer without touching a keyboard or speaking. To do a task, such as search for a weather forecast, ask the question to yourself, silently. The headset’s sensors read signals from your face. Then, using a web connection, the device does the task on your laptop. Researchers found that a prototype could understand its user 92% of the time.

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Do your parents get frustrated looking for a parking spot in a busy area? **CITY TRANSFORMER’S ELECTRIC VEHICLE** could be the solution. The Israeli company’s two-seater car is tiny. But it can reach 55 miles per hour. Even better? When traveling at slower speeds, the vehicle can pull its wheels in closer for a one-meter (about one yard) width. This helps it fit into narrow streets and snug spots. City Transformer expects the first vehicles to be on the road in Tel Aviv, Israel, by 2022.

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About 46 million gamers in the U.S. live with a disability. For some, standard controllers, mouses, and keyboards are challenging to use. In 2018, Microsoft introduced its Xbox Adaptive Controller. It has ports where you can plug in aids, such as a foot pedal. Now Microsoft has partnered with Logitech to make the **ADAPTIVE GAMING KIT**. For $99, players get 10 buttons, two triggers, hooks, pads, loops, and other gear to customize their controllers. One reviewer described the kit as “honestly revolutionary.”

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—By Marjorie Korn

—By Jason Cipriani

—By Patrick Lucas Austin

—By Matthew Gault
**Handwashing Station**

Handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of viruses. But about 40% of the world's population lacks running water and soap at home. That's why Japan's LIXIL has created the **SA TO TAP**. It's a portable, refillable handwashing station with a soap holder. The gadget is expected to go on sale in early 2021, for between $3 and $6. LIXIL is working to get 500,000 units to households around the world in the next year. —By Ciara Nugent

**Better Smartphone**

More than 50 million tons of electronic waste is created each year. Much of it includes materials that were unethically sourced. (For example, the gold found in circuit boards is often mined under dangerous conditions.) But Fairphone makes phones using responsibly sourced materials. And they're built to last. Made of up to 40% recycled plastic, the new **FAIRPHONE 3+** has an expected life span of five years. It also has replaceable parts. You can swap your battery, screen, or camera with a screwdriver. This encourages users to keep their devices longer.

—By Patrick Lucas Austin
WHEN STARS ARE SCATTERED

This graphic novel by **VICTORIA JAMIESON** and **OMAR MOHAMED** tells the true story of two brothers who live in a refugee camp in Kenya. Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, have fled a war in their home country of Somalia. I find this book to be very inspirational. Even though they are kids, the boys deal with many adults problems. The brothers stick together, no matter what life throws at them. —By TFK Kid Reporter Miguel Madero

BEE FEARLESS: DREAM LIKE A KID

**MIKAILA ULMER** is a 15-year-old entrepreneur. She’s created a healthy version of lemon-ade made with honey, which she sells all over the country. She donates a portion of the proceeds to bee conservation. In *Bee Fearless*, Mikaila shares her story and offers business tips. Readers will love learning how Mikaila’s business grew and what she’s doing to encourage the next generation of entrepreneurs. —By TFK Kid Reporter Abby Rogers

CONDOR COMEBACK

In *Condor Comeback*, nature writer **SY MONTGOMERY** follows conservationists as they care for endangered California condors. They’re the largest flying North American land birds and are revered in Native American culture. The text alternates between an exciting story and complex science that will appeal to nature lovers. Can scientists revive the condor population? Read *Condor Comeback* to find out! —By TFK Kid Reporter Jeremy Liew

MAÑANALAND

Eleven-year-old Max loves his abuelo’s stories of Mañanaland, a place where dreams come true. Max dreams of making the fútbol team and finding his missing mamá. When Max discovers a secret, he sets off for Mañanaland in search of answers. On the way, he gains something more precious than a spot on the team. I love this book by **PAM MUÑOZ RYAN** because each page is different and interesting. —By TFK Kid Reporter Afton Campbell

Looking for something to read? Here, TFK Kid Reporters review four noteworthy books of 2020. For more recommendations, visit timeforkids.com.