



Action For Nature

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*Encouraging young people to take personal action to nurture and protect
a healthy environment on which all life depends*

WINTER 2008/2009



AFN Founder Shimon Schwarzschild, above with International Eco-Heroes at New York reception (named below), and at right and with his wife, Naomi.

NEW YORK RECEPTION HIGHLIGHTS ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF YOUNG ECO-HEROES

Action For Nature (AFN) has worked since 1984 to inspire young people to make a difference in protecting the environment. AFN's International Eco-Hero Award program is a successful example. Those who attended the November 8 reception in New York City for seven Young Eco-Heroes from the East Coast considered these efforts well-spent! The young presenters, ranging in age from 12 to 16, came with their families from New York, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Connecticut to receive their awards and to report on their environmental conservation projects. AFN President Beryl Kay, AFN founder Shimon Schwarzschild, and former board member Jean Barish who attended were awestruck by the wisdom, poise, intelligence, and enthusiasm of the award winners as they described to their audience how they selected an environmental problem and worked to fix it.

The 2008 AFN winners were honored and presented with their award certificates. The following described their projects and spoke about the role of young people in resolving environmental problems: Tehreem Rehman, Chanelle Adams, Delphine Slotten, Colin Carlson, Alex Lin, Brian Meersma, and Cynthia Onorevole. Their award-winning projects are described on the AFN Web site: www.actionfornature.org.

The reception, held at the Mercy Corps Acton Center to End Hunger, sizzled with excitement and camaraderie as the Eco-Heroes and their families discussed and exchanged ideas, as well as vowing to stay connected with each other. Special thanks are due to Mercy Corps for allowing us to use their beautiful new space overlooking the Hudson River and for supporting Action For Nature. Thanks, too, to former board member Jean Barish and to our Web Master Scott Bowling for their help.

We plan to arrange future receptions for other Young Eco-Heroes, funding permitting. In fact, we hope to arrange a reception for West Coast Eco-Heroes early in 2009, and to do more in the future for our international winners.

Shimon Schwarzschild

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OUR THANKS

Again we extend our **heartfelt thanks** and gratitude to those individuals who make it possible for us to support and encourage young environmentalists. Without each of you, we could not continue. Especially to those of you who make annual gifts, please know that your generosity helps to make this world a better place for all of us.

Likewise, we deeply appreciate the ongoing support of **Parnassus Investments and Pfizer Corporation.**

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FROM AFN'S BOARD CHAIR



Dear Friends of Action For Nature,

As most of you know, we write to you only once a year to report our progress and to invite you to continue your support. Your generosity has allowed us to continue supporting young eco-heroes, for which we are deeply grateful.

In these challenging environmental times, it is becoming increasingly evident that fewer young people are being introduced to the joys, complexities, and possibilities that nature has to offer. Vast numbers of people—young and old—seem unaware that failing to care for the planet now will doom future generations to live in a world that is radically different—and even possibly uninhabitable—from the one we know today. It is vital that children are actively involved in learning to appreciate and protect the natural world, and that we encourage and support them in their endeavors.

Action For Nature offers an important program, the **International Young Eco-Hero Award**, which honors impressive and forward-thinking young leaders. Through their own efforts, and with the media attention they receive through becoming an AFN Eco-Hero, they, and we, are able to influence public opinion and awaken other youngsters and people everywhere to the urgent need to align ourselves with the natural world.

We respectfully ask, therefore, that you once again **remember Action For Nature in your annual gift giving.** Your help is so urgently needed to continue this program sustained only by volunteers. Please know that your donation will be used to promote current activities and future leadership through promoting our International Young Eco-Hero Award.

With warmest regards and deep appreciation,

Evelyn

Evelyn Ballard de Ghetaldi, MD

Chair, Board of Directors, Action For Nature

ECO-HERO ANDREW LEONARD MEETS MILEY CYRUS

Resulting from his excellent performance in press interviews generated by his Eco-Hero Award, **Andrew Leonard** (2008 winner from Redwood City, Calif.) was selected by **Youth Service America** and **Disney** as one of ten stellar youth activists from across the nation to attend an event with teen celebrity **Miley Cyrus** (Hannah Montana). Here he is backstage with dancers from the show in Los Angeles. (Photo by George Leonard)
www.andrewleonard.com/globalpartners/



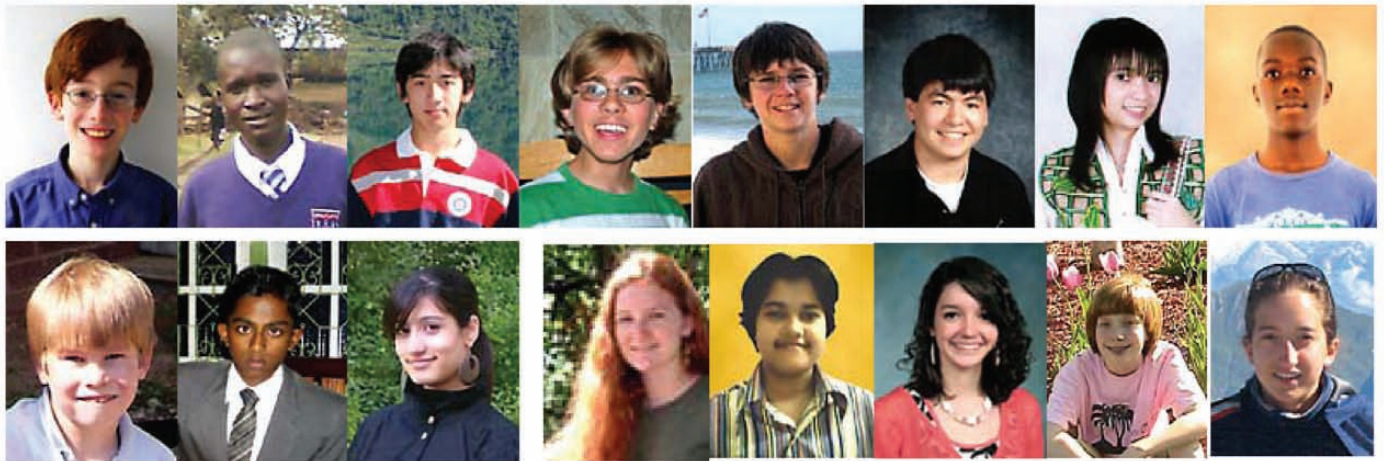
AFN INTERNATIONAL ECO-HERO AWARD PRESENTED BY UN OFFICIAL

Vania Santoso was presented with her Eco-Hero Award certificate by **Theodore Oben**, Chief Children and Youth Officer of the United Nations Environment Programme at the UNEP Children's Conference in Norway.



AFN ECO-HERO PRESENTS A WORKSHOP AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Alec Loorz hosting a workshop on empowering youth to stop climate change at the nationally-renowned Bioneers conference in San Rafael, Calif.



AFN 2008 Winners from top left: Colin Carlson, Limus Wafula, Alexander Lin, Nathan Moos, Alec Loorz, Andrew Leonard, Vania Santoso, Steven Muganzi, Benjamin Workinger, Dulanjana Wathsaridu, Tehreem Rehman, Maria Gast, Prachi Lalit Mishra, Cynthia Onorevole, Dylan Pidich, Delphine Slotten

INTERNATIONAL 2008 YOUNG ECO-HEROES REFLECT CURRENT ISSUES

This year we honored 14 youth from such diverse places as Sri Lanka, Uganda, Indonesia, Kenya, India, and the United States. The efforts of our 2008 winners strongly represent the current environmental issues that the world is facing. Both Alec Loorz (California, age 13) and Colin Carlson (Connecticut, age 11) took on climate change with Alec going as far as to meet and become trained by Al Gore, as well as host a climate change panel for youth at the 2008 annual Bioneers conference. Other projects by this year's winners included creating a habitat for migrating monarch butterflies, cleaning up pollution in a poor Nairobi community, educating peers about recycling and composting, founding an organization to recycle and re-use electronic waste, persuading an African rural community to harvest scarce rainwater, researching and communicating the connection between human health problems and pollution and chemicals, launching an anti-idling campaign creating a global network for environmental solutions between the U.S. and China, and initiating school recycling programs. Each project followed the progression of discovering and researching a problem, gathering a network of others for support, and tackling the problem. We are proud of these young people and hope you will enjoy reading more about each of their individual achievements at www.actionfornature.org.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us provide resources for these young environmental role models.

NEWS OF CURRENT AND FORMER INTERNATIONAL ECO-HEROES

This year's winners, as well as former winners, continue to inspire all of us with their successes. Here are only a few of their stories:

Alec Loorz (2008) got to meet his hero, the former Vice President Al Gore, who praised Alec for his environmental work and appointed him one of the youngest members of the Inconvenient Truth Speaking Panel. Alec and his group, **Global Warming Kids**, organized and presented a workshop at the nationally-renowned **Bioneers** conference in San Rafael, Calif., in October 2008. In mid-December, at the invitation of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa of Los Angeles, Alec was the keynote speaker at the Environmental Youth Conference attended by 5,000 young people, ages 12 to 16.

www.globalwarmingkids.net.

Nathan Moos (2008) was presented with his Eco-Hero Award certificate in Salt Lake City by Mayor Ralph Becker. Having given several press interviews, Nathan participated as an expert in a radio program called *Radio Active*, discussing air quality, saving gas money, and protecting Utah's environment.

Linus Wafula (2008) worked with the **Nairobi River Clean-up Project** during the **Global Peace Festival** in Kenya. Approximately 2,000 youth participated in cleaning up narrow and polluted waterways, along whose banks thousands of people live.

Colin Carlson (2008) is starting a **Keep US Cool** initiative. This coalition of environmental groups shares their experiences and ideas about what has worked and how to take environmental projects to the next level.

webpages.charter.net/cool_coventry_club/home.htm

Caroline Hodge (2007) works as an apprentice on an organic vegetable farm in Connecticut. She loves it and spends her spare time cooking fresh produce from the farm and reading about sustainable agriculture, biodynamic farming, and permaculture.

Brian Meersma (2007) educates the public about compostable food service products through posters and tables at events. He is making a visual presentation on the evils of plastic bags to be shown at schools.

Jason Fischel (2006) continues his Environmental Science studies at Juniata College in Pennsylvania. He spent a study semester at the University of Otago in New Zealand.

Christina Faust (2004) will graduate in May 2009 with an M.S. in ecology from the University of Georgia. She is on a full scholarship plus travel funds and is a recipient of the **Morris K. Udall Scholarship** and the **Harry S. Truman Scholarship**.

Taylor McGinnes (2006) has, among many other pursuits, handed out 700 energy-efficient light bulbs in his community in Illinois. This November he will be honored with the **Jane Goodall Youth Leadership Award** in Washington, D.C.

Adam Meyer (2006) continues his board, fundraising, and organizational work. He has created his own blog "to celebrate the beauty of the earth and to inspire action."

adamenvironment.blogspot.com/

Chanelle Adams (2006) has become a published poet and author. In April 2008 she was selected as **Activist of the Month** by Teen Voices Online. To read her poem, visit

www.teenvoices.com/issue_current/articles/apr_08_activist_month.htm.



Andrew Leonard being interviewed by Comcast

**AFN INTERNATIONAL YOUNG ECO-HEROES
RECEIVE WIDE MEDIA COVERAGE**

By getting out the word about our awesome Eco Heroes, we hope to inspire countless others to take action. Here is a sampling of the recent news coverage we've received:

Newspapers:

Los Angeles Times, Salt Lake City Tribune, Scranton Times, India West, World Journal Newspaper, Ming Pao Daily News, Ventura County Star, Westerly Sun, World Journal Daily News

Web sites and blogs

Greenspace, www.4Real.com,
www.greenrightnow.com

Radio and TV

Comcast Cable, KGO7, KRON4, KTSF26, NBC 30 CT News, Discovery Channel, KJ2@Cafe, KAUER, KRCI, RadioActive

Magazines

BabagaNewz, Glamour

Textbooks

Earth Matters by Scholastic; *Protecting Earth's Water Supply* and *Protecting Earth's Land* by Lerner; and *Take Action – Make a Difference* by Pearson of Canada



Glamour Magazine selected Tehreem Rehman for a "Green woman" issue due out in April 2009. Here she is at the shoot in Central Park, NYC

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Excerpts from www.greenrightnow.com,
July 17, 2008, Young Eco-Heroes Take The Planet's Future Into Their Own Hands," written by Catherine Giradeau;

"What's going on here? Eleven-year olds persuading local business owners to adopt energy conservation measures? Kids too young to vote lobbying local and state governments and getting laws passed to protect the environment? Sixteen-year olds tackling an inner-city community's waste-management problems? To become an Action For Nature Young Eco-Hero, kids have to persevere and achieve a result," said Beryl Kay (AFN President). The winners of the monetary awards, she said, have "gone ahead and completed a project that sometimes has not been easy. Maybe they've overcome a fear of public speaking or a fear of talking to important adults, such as government officials."

"Lots of people I talked to don't believe global warming is real," (Colin Carlson) said. "One guy said it was just 12-year sun spots." But, But, like Nathan Moos, who launched an anti-idling campaign, Colin learned that a pragmatic approach could circumvent philosophical differences."

Our once-a-year report to our supporters