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Kenya Student Among 2021 International Young Eco-Hero Award Winners

Local Student Receives Top Honor for Contributions to Solving Environmental Problems

San Francisco – Mallyka Ianna Oddenyo, a 12 year-old from Kisumu, Kenya is one of 25 young environmental activists from across the globe honored by Action For Nature (AFN) as a 2021 International Young Eco-Hero, an award that recognizes eco-conscious youth ages 8 to 16 who are taking crucial steps to solve tough environmental problems.

Winners of the International Young Eco-Hero Award are selected by a panel of independent judges, including experts in environmental science, biology, and education. Since 2003, Action For Nature has recognized more than 300 Eco-Heroes from over 30 countries and 25 U.S. states.

Mallyka Ianna won 1st Place in the 8-14 year-old category for her project, “Cleaning & Preventing Plastic Pollution.”

Mallyka Ianna started collecting plastic waste at eight years old after a disturbing experience – seeing a dead fish floating in a nearby lake with its head stuck inside a plastic bottle – made her aware of the plastic pollution crisis. Now, she collects and recycles plastic waste into useful items like flower vases, picture frames, table mats, face masks, hand bags and pencil holders, educates the community about reducing plastic waste, and mobilizes other young people to collect plastic pollution and turn it into useful items, thus preventing the plastic from making its way into oceans, lakes, and waterways.

“Kids like Mallyka Ianna have shown that the next generation of leaders is here, and they’re not waiting to solve the world’s most pressing environmental challenges,” said Beryl Kay, president of Action For Nature, an international non-profit organization that encourages young people to nurture a love and respect for the Earth and to take personal action to improve the environment. “The projects that these young people have created will not only have real, positive impacts on their communities, they will also help solve global climate challenges and inspire others – no matter what age – to consider what they can do to help.”

“Plastic pollutes our poor Lake Victoria and oceans, and kills many of our fish,” said Mallyka Ianna Oddenyo. “We all have a major role to play in ending plastic pollution.”

To read more about Mallyka Ianna’s work, visit facebook.com/ianna.mallyka.

To learn more about this year’s International Young Eco-Hero Award winners, visit actionfornature.org/eco-hero-awards/2021-awards.

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Action For Nature (AFN) is an international non-profit organization based in San Francisco, California, that encourages young people to nurture a love and respect for Earth’s natural resources and to take personal action to better their environments.