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Durban Student Among 2021 International Young Eco-Hero Award Winners

Local Student Receives Top Honor for Contributions to Solving Environmental Problems

San Francisco – Romario Valentine, a 9 year-old from Durban, South Africa, 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.

Romario received an Honorable Mention in the 8-14 year-old category for his project, Save Our Ocean, Endangered Bird Conservation, and Tree Reforestation.

When Romario Valentine was 6 years old, he asked his mother to help him clean up the local beach after learning that ocean pollution was devastating marine life. Since then, he has completed 175 beach clean-ups. In addition to working to protect marine life, Romario is also active with a conservation program called Birds of Eden in Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape, that saves birds from poaching and abuse. And in July 2020, he raised funds for the Umgeni River Bird Park in Durban which looks after over 900 birds from 200 species. He is also passionate about reforestation and has sponsored tree plantings around the world.

“Kids like Romario have shown that the next generation of leaders is here, and they are refusing to wait 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 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.”

“I believe it is my mission to protect the environment and biodiversity,” said Romario Valentine. “You are never too young to help nature. Let’s work together to save our beautiful planet.”

To read more about Romario’s work, visit twitter.com/artistromario.

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.