

## PRESS RELEASE

# ELENA MCGOEY NAMED 2023 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Elena M. McGoey of Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, has been named a 2023 Distinguished Senior at The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES).

“The Distinguished Senior Award is the most prestigious undergraduate award in CFAES and honors top graduating seniors on the Ohio State Columbus campus,” said Ann Christy, CFAES professor and associate dean for academic programs. “The 25 award recipients exemplify the CFAES mission in areas such as academics and scholarship, research and innovation, service and involvement, and influence and leadership.”

McGoey, an animal sciences major with a specialization in animal biosciences, was nominated by college faculty and staff in the Department of Animal Sciences, who felt that she personified the award’s attributes of academic, disciplinary, and professional excellence.

On the Dean’s List for six semesters, she also completed three internships. At the Humane Animal Rescue of Pittsburgh in Verona, Pennsylvania, she worked as a wildlife rehabilitation intern. She was an animal care intern at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Powell, Ohio, and the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium in Pittsburgh.

Each of her internships provided unique experiences. “For my wildlife center internship, I completed several re-releases of wildlife including birds of prey, songbirds, possums, and rabbits. At the Columbus Zoo, I designed a new enrichment item for the white-handed gibbons and siamangs which helped promote the apes’ natural behaviors and stimulate them mentally,” she said. “For the Pittsburgh Zoo internship, I created an enrichment calendar for the wolverine pair to be used by the keepers during the non-breeding season. It focused on goal-based enrichment with the intent of enhancing natural behaviors.”

Her departmental nominator wrote, “I have watched Elena pour herself into involvement in academics and extracurriculars, while growing as a researcher, mentor, and leader. She has distinguished herself as a role model and inspiration for non-traditional students within CFAES. She is a joy to teach, a true community servant, and a highly qualified candidate for veterinary college.”

McGoey also conducted research through the parasite and pathogen ecology lab in the Ohio State College of Veterinary Medicine. She helped to investigate the prevalence and diversity of tick-borne pathogens across eastern Canada. The projects led to two scientific publications with McGoey as second author.

She was also very active with campus activities and organizations including the Ohio State Irish Dance Team, the Fish and Wildlife Society, Eminence Fellows Program Ambassador, Students with Children at OSU, and the Buck-I-SERV program.

As a single mother with a young daughter, McGoey has devoted time to mentoring young high school mothers seeking further education after graduation. She works through Ohio State's Office of Diversity and Inclusion's CHAMPS program (College and High School Aspiring Mothers Partnership for Success).

"As a parenting college student, I serve as a role model that further education as a parent is definitely possible," she said. "I help my mentees realize their potential, assist them with the college application and financial aid processes, and connect them with community resources. It is extremely rewarding to see a mentee form career goals for herself and realize her self-worth that extends beyond motherhood."

Following graduation, McGoey will apply to veterinary school (while working as a veterinary assistant) with the intent of becoming a food animal veterinarian. "I plan to become a licensed wildlife rehabber as well," she said.

A reception for the Distinguished Senior Award recipients and their families was held on Wednesday, March 22, hosted by Ann Christy and Cathann A. Kress, vice president for agricultural administration and CFAES dean. Meet the 25 outstanding students and learn more about each via a YouTube video release at [go.osu.edu/CFAES2023DSA](https://go.osu.edu/CFAES2023DSA).

In autumn 2022, there were 2,248 undergraduate students in CFAES pursuing bachelor of science degrees in 22 majors. Learn more about CFAES academic programs at [go.osu.edu/B4V2](https://go.osu.edu/B4V2).



## **Elena M. McGoey**

**PITTSBURGH, PA**

ANIMAL SCIENCES - ANIMAL BIOSCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SCIENCES

Photo available by sending a request to [flood.13@osu.edu](mailto:flood.13@osu.edu)

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