

PRESS RELEASE

MATTHEW SEMLER NAMED 2023 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Matthew D. Semler of Bay Village, Ohio, 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.”

Semler is an entomology and biology double major in the Department of Entomology and Department of Biology. They were nominated by entomology faculty and staff who felt that they personified the award’s attributes of academic, disciplinary, and professional excellence.

The Cuyahoga County resident identified their most valuable learning experience as working at Ohio State’s Museum of Biological Diversity with the Triplehorn Insect Collection, one of the largest university insect collections in the country. Their work included imaging of specimens, moving and cleaning specimens, and overall assisting in the curation of the beetle collection.

“The museum gave me invaluable skills and experiences pertaining to my future goals and passions. Also, it reaffirmed a great deal of what I want to do in the future whether it be taxonomy, teaching, or research,” Semler said. “All of my interests were packaged into one little box and it ultimately influenced me to continue my education in graduate school.”

Semler also completed a internship in the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Organismal Biology as a student assistant for the Ohio Bee Survey. They assisted a graduate student with their research, which was conducted on Ohio State’s campus and in surrounding Franklin County Metro Parks.

His entomology advisor, Joe, Raczkowski was pleased when Semler secured the Ohio Bee Survey position. “In this role, Matthew conducted surveys of bees and the flowers they visited, entered data for statistical analysis, and identified/curated the bee specimens they encountered during the survey,” he said. Together with the graduate student, they dissected the bumble bee colonies they had reared to obtain data on the size and number of cells present in the colony. “This project gave Matthew a realistic view of graduate-level field-based research which convinced them to apply to graduate programs for next year,” said Raczkowski.

In addition to demonstrating academic excellence, Semler also participated in the Habitat for Humanity Club, Trans*Mission, and the Astronomy Club. They served as president of Chrysalis, the undergraduate entomology

club, and promoted entomology to Ohio State undergraduates throughout his tenure. Raczkowski noted that “because Chrysalis members have responded so well to Matthew’s enthusiasm for entomology, the organization is currently very strong and poised for many activities.”

Semler’s most rewarding and enjoyable experience was time spent with Chrysalis members at Deep Woods, a privately-owned 280-acre tract of land in Hocking County. “It was a truly unique experience that I am really grateful for. It was so amazing to camp out in the middle of nowhere and catch bugs all day,” they said. “Late at night when the lights and sun were gone, the stars were magnificent. I’d recommend it for anyone who shares an interest in insects because it was so wonderful to spend time collecting with like-minded individuals.”

After graduation, Semler will attend graduate school at Ohio State pursuing a master’s degree likely studying native pollinators. He also hopes to also pursue his PhD in the future.

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.

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.



Matthew D. Semler

BAY VILLAGE, OH

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Photo available by sending a request to flood.13@osu.edu

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