

PRESS RELEASE

LYDIA G. AINSWORTH NAMED 2024 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Lydia G. “Liddie” Ainsworth of Dublin, Ohio, has been named a 2024 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 23 award recipients exemplify the CFAES mission in areas such as academics and scholarship, research and innovation, service and involvement, and influence and leadership.”

Ainsworth is a food business management major in the Department of Food Science and Technology. With a double minor in business, and entrepreneurship and innovation, she was nominated by college faculty and staff who felt that she personified the award’s attributes of academic, disciplinary, and professional excellence.

The Franklin County resident completed two summer internships, one with Spritz Tea, a local sparkling tea startup in Columbus, and another with Abbott Nutrition in Cincinnati. “During the critical period of the Spritz Tea Kroger pilot in the summer of 2022, Liddie contributed greatly to the brand’s on-shelf success through her adept use of digital marketing and sales outreach,” said Kathryn Dougherty, former CEO of Spritz Tea. “The brand thrived because of her tireless work and enthusiasm.”

At Abbott, Ainsworth focused on using Abbott brands to develop an incremental health and wellness “season” for Kroger that aligned with their food as medicine strategy. Through networking, professional development seminars, and over 100 one-on-one calls with members of the retail team, she gained new skills in data analytics, public speaking, and shopper marketing.

Ainsworth’s extracurricular activities focused around Delta Zeta Sorority where she served as the health and wellness chair. She planned and executed multiple events aimed at helping members prioritize their health during the semester. Delta Zeta also supports the Starkey Hearing Foundation, which works to educate people on hearing, hearing loss, and hearing aids. Through philanthropic events, she raised proceeds to support this foundation.

Ainsworth worked on a research project with FST graduate student Jenna McClure to study the effects of soy-based protein on muscle recovery. She utilized the FST pilot plant to bake a soy-based snack each week, attended weekly data collection sessions with multiple participants, and assisted in data analysis through the organization and creation of graphs.

“This was an incredible learning opportunity for Liddie that deepened her passion for nutrition and exercise,” said Chris Simons, associate professor of sensory science in FST. “Liddie knew she wanted to gain more experience in the business world and find a way to combine nutrition, food science, and business, which inspired her to explore marketing internships for healthy and nutritious products.”

After graduation, Ainsworth will join Abbott Nutrition in Columbus as part of their retail development program. “I plan to learn, develop, and remain there for the coming years either in Columbus or Chicago,” she said. “I eventually would like to attend business school, earn my MBA, and enter into the realm of product innovation.”

A reception for the Distinguished Senior Award recipients and their families was held on Thursday, April 4, hosted by Ann Christy and Cathann A. Kress, Ohio State vice president for agricultural administration and CFAES dean. Meet the 23 outstanding students and learn more about each via a YouTube video release at go.osu.edu/CFAES2024DSA.

“Honoring the award recipients for their excellence will be a highlight for us this spring. These students have excelled and most certainly will continue to thrive in their future careers,” said Christy.

In autumn 2023, there were 2,224 undergraduate students in CFAES pursuing Bachelor of Science degrees in 21 majors. Learn more about CFAES academic programs at go.osu.edu/B4V2.



Lydia G. Ainsworth

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

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