

PRESS RELEASE

RACHEL L. BARRETT NAMED 2024 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Rachel L. Barrett of Rockford, 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.” Barrett is a food science and technology major in the Department of Food Science and Technology (FST). She was nominated by college faculty and staff who felt that she personified the award’s attributes of academic, disciplinary, and professional excellence.

On the dean’s list each semester, she is a member of the Food Science Club, Alpha Zeta Partners honorary, and The Running Club at Ohio State. She was also part of the Kellogg-Moser Food Security and Sustainability Learning Community.

As a third-year FST Peer Mentor and a CFAES Ambassador, Barrett is a connection and resource for prospective, first-year, and transfer students helping them find their place at Ohio State and their interest area in CFAES.

Barrett conducted food research with Jessica Cooperstone, an associate professor with a joint appointment between the Departments of FST and Horticulture and Crop Science. She investigated a potential correlation between health-associated compounds in apples (phenolics, tannins, and anthocyanins) and flavor preferences. While there are assumptions, it is unknown if these compounds negatively influence the apples’ flavor.

The Mercer County resident completed three summer internships. She worked for General Mills in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and Minneapolis, first in food safety and quality, and then in research and development. She completed an additional internship in quality assurance at The Wendy’s Company in Dublin, Ohio.

Barrett indicated that her most enjoyable experience was her study abroad trip to Costa Rica. “I loved getting to explore another country and learn about their culture. Seeing farm operations and other agricultural-related sites was very fulfilling for me,” she said. “The trip also included a lot of hiking and outdoors time, along with a ziplining excursion.”

Associate professor in FST and academic advisor Chris Simons said, “Rachel’s college experience has challenged her to grow as a young professional and given her the opportunity to have an impact on her community. She adapted to constantly changing situations and uncertain outcomes, especially during her first two years of college affected by COVID-19. While this was a challenging time, she sought opportunities to build her community from scratch. She joined six student organizations while staying academically focused,

2024 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AWARD

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maintaining her 3.9 GPA. Rachel also gives back to the Ohio State community by participating in 400 hours of community service through her GOYA Foods Scholarship.”

After graduation, Barrett will move to Minneapolis where she will work as a research and development scientist at General Mills’ headquarters.

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.



Rachel L. Barrett

ROCKFORD, OH

Food Science and Technology

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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