

PRESS RELEASE

TALIA M. KATZ NAMED 2024 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Talia M. Katz of Deerfield, Illinois, 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.”

Katz 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.

According to Katz, her most valuable learning experience was “overcoming fears and placing myself into new situations. I opened myself up to amazing opportunities, which helped me to succeed in my college career. I have learned that you never know what an opportunity, whether small or large, could bring,” she said.

She was on the dean’s list each semester, and she completed three internships: two in Ohio and one in Tel Aviv, Israel. At the J.M. Smucker Company, Orville, Ohio, Katz gained insights into consumer product goods working with the pet research and development team. At American Dairy Association-Mideast in Columbus, Ohio, she conducted research on the effects of salts on butter oil, as well as utilizing Kefir grains in butter.

At the nonprofit StartUpRoots in Israel, she worked to revitalize its educational programs for low-income schools by implementing lessons about nutrition, food science, and food waste. By giving back to the community in Israel, Katz was better able to understand the education discrepancies that exist between countries, and was better able to understand ways to lessen the gaps.

But her greatest sense of accomplishment as a student came from conducting research. “My research projects helped set me apart,” she said. “Conducting research alongside graduate students encouraged me to learn more complex ideas and to think at a more critical level. It also taught me the importance of sharing my research to receive recognition for the hard work.” She received first and second place awards at CFAES poster and FoodSURE poster competitions.

Katz also conducted research in associate professor Christopher Simons’ sensory lab using eye-tracking technology to analyze gaze patterns as consumers looked at food labels. She published her results in Waste Management journal. An independent research project with professor Rafael Jimenez-Flores’ helped to understand crystallization of anhydrous milk fat and corn oil, and she will present her findings in May to dairy farmers and a board of directors.

Katz's extracurricular activities included service as an FST peer mentor helping freshmen transition into college life, a CFAES Ambassador, and a member of the Food Science Club.

After graduation, Katz plans to attend graduate school for a master's degree in food science.

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.



Talia M. Katz

DEERFIELD, IL

Food Science and Technology

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

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