

# Press Release

March 11, 2019

## **Berkowitz Named 2019 Distinguished Senior at The Ohio State University**

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Kevin Berkowitz of West Bloomfield, Michigan has been named a 2019 Distinguished Senior at The Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES).

"The Distinguished Senior Award is the most prestigious undergraduate award in CFAES, recognizing the top graduating seniors from each of the academic units on the Columbus campus," said Steven Neal, CFAES associate dean and director of academic programs.

Berkowitz, a culinary science major from Oakland County, will be honored at an on-campus awards dinner on March 27 where all 25 distinguished CFAES seniors will be recognized.

The CFAES Distinguished Senior Award honors academic, disciplinary and professional excellence.

"One of the hallmarks of our College is an emphasis on student success, and it is heartwarming to see it exemplified through the accomplishments of our students," Neal said. "Recipients are our future innovators and leaders who have already made an impact within the academic environment at this university and beyond."

Julie Townsend, administrative manager in the Department of Food Science and Technology who nominated Berkowitz for the award, wrote, "Kevin chose to expand on his associate's degree in culinary arts from Schoolcraft College in Michigan by pursuing the culinary science degree at Ohio State. He found our degree track to be specifically tailored to culinary graduates who wanted to expand their background into the world of food science. It has allowed him to gain many new experiences to assist him with his future plans."

Berkowitz is a member of the Food Science Club at Ohio State, where he serves as the CFAES Liaison, a position that allows him to act as a source of communication between the club and the CFAES Student Council.

Berkowitz also works in the sensory lab through the departmental FoodS.U.R.E. program, a research program designed to allow undergraduate students to get involved in research and develop their own research project. He conducted his own psychophysical experiment on "Tactile sensitivity of different oral tissues to punctate pressure" while working in the lab.

Throughout the process of the experiment, he worked with others in the lab to learn processes and has navigated through the lab environment, learning valuable research skills. This research experience exposed him to the sensory side of food science, something he would not have gained through his regular coursework. He also presented his research at the 2018 Fall Undergraduate Research Festival.

Berkowitz also competed in the American Baking Society Product Development Competition. He worked many months alongside three other food science students to create

Distinguished Senior Award



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

CFAES

a new delicious baked good that included international flavors while maintaining at least a two-week shelf life. After much deliberation they invented the Gemstone Cakes™, a chai masala cake enrobed in white chocolate. This competition was one of his first major involvements with food science.

He was able to apply much of what he had learned in the classroom to this product development effort. The team finished in second place in the 2017-2018 American Society of Baking Product Development Competition in Chicago.

After graduation, Berkowitz will pursue a career in the food industry as a research chef working specifically in research and development.

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Electronic files of head shot for this individual award recipients may be secured by making an email request to Warren Flood at [flood.13@osu.edu](mailto:flood.13@osu.edu).