



MARIA FREDERICKS

School of Environment and Natural Resources

**Environmental Policy and Decision Making - Honors
Valley Stream, NY**

Maria relates organizing for and activating students around fossil fuel divestment as one of the most arduous pursuits she has taken on as a student. Though this work is increasingly necessary, it also means that activists bear the weight of the world on their shoulders. That's why when Renew OSU, despite all political

and financial obstacles, successfully fought for and won a near-unanimous Undergraduate Student Government resolution in 2016, Maria felt as though the struggle had finally paid off.

Maria knew as a first generation Latinx college student with a full tuition scholarship, that it was her responsibility to give back to her community. Maria worked with the Latinx Space for Enrichment and Research (LASER) during her second year mentoring a Columbus Latinx high school student. When Maria began working with her first-generation LASER mentee, she knew her mentee was applying to Ohio State against all odds. They worked past this through mentorship, capacity-building, and cultural connection. Maria's mentee is now a second-year student at Ohio State on a full scholarship.

Quito, Ecuador, Maria's birth city and home located in the heart of the Andes, has a beautiful river rich in history that runs through the city. The Río Machángara was historically a site of agricultural production, family bath time, and clothes-washing kinship. Despite this history, today the river is seen as a site of danger, filth, and contamination, having little to offer in the way of a collective identity. The cultural house "Machankara" in Quito has been working to reawaken Quiteños' connection to the river. Maria gleaned pride from an experience during her undergraduate years by performing a theatrical piece rooted in regional oral histories with the cultural house.

Included within Maria's academic honors are: Morrill Scholarship - Prominence Scholarship | Dean's List | Department of Comparative Studies Colloquium Presentation | Office of Energy and Environment Sustainability Scholarship | Udall Scholarship Honorable Mention | School of Environment and Natural Resources Honors Scholarship | International Symposium on Society and Resource Management Presentation | National Symposium on Spanish as a Heritage Language Essay Contest.

Maria will spend a week in Louisiana after graduation with the Livable Futures Field School to learn from and work with artists and indigenous activists. During the summer of 2019, Maria will continue her community outreach work with the Ohio State Student Farm. After the summer, Maria is looking forward to returning to her beloved country, Ecuador, to build upon her knowledge of small-scale farming, and to enact decentralized community development. Following her time in South America, Maria plans to earn a PhD in Critical Geography.

Maria selected Dr. Cathy Rakowski as her mentor. Maria shares, "From the moment I met Dr. Rakowski, I was empowered by her fervent passion and determination for feminism in Latin America. Speaking to a group of freshmen seeking faculty advisors, she passionately highlighted the need to link environmental social science literature to feminist theory and principles. Without Dr. Rakowski's kindness and encouragement, I never would have pursued undergraduate research, much less international research in Ecuador. I will forever be indebted to her academic and life lessons."

