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Environment, Economy, Development, and Sustainability
- Sustainability and Business

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One of the first sustainability initiatives that Matthew completed while at OSU was with the SUSTAINS learning community. They created plans for a learning garden that would grow in the Scott House Dorm. This garden would serve as a chance for students to interact with nature in the dorm and provide students with the chance to learn hands-on gardening skills. He notes this project as helping him enhance his leadership and communication skills. Implemented in Fall 2016, the garden has been improved upon by successful years of SUSTAINS students.

One of the opportunities Matthew recognizes as a source of pride from his undergraduate education is guiding the 2018 NCAA Women's Final Four (WFF) basketball tournament through the rigorous Council for Responsible Sport sustainability certification program. During this process, he worked with people from a variety of fields, and experienced how sports can be used to connect people with sustainability. Leading this certification process required Matthew to conduct a variety of analyses to account for the resources used during the tournament and to coordinate with the local planning committee. Through these initiatives, they hosted three tree plantings to offset the energy and water used during the event. They also spread information about sustainability initiatives happening in Columbus. The group achieved the highest certification of "Evergreen" for the efforts and establishing a legacy for future WFF tournaments.

Matthew's academic accomplishments include: Dean's List | Clarkson NRE Scholarship | Bert W. Martin Fund | Morrill Excellence Scholarship | Kahliff Scholarship | OEE Sustainability Scholarship | Brown Family Scholarship | Violet Township Fire Memorial Fund.

Another experience from Matthew's years at Ohio State that fills him with pride is organizing the Careers in Sustainability Panel for Net Impact, Fisher, and CFAES. This panel brought in sustainability leaders from a variety of industries and allowed for students to ask questions to the panelists in a small group format. Seeing how passionate students were to engage with these professionals showed him the value of creating these opportunities for students and inspired him to find other ways to create additional opportunities.

After graduation, Matthew plans to pursue a position where he will be able to work with a community and address environmental justice issues. Eventually, he hopes to work in higher education where he can develop programs for sustainability education. He also intends to obtain a graduate degree in the future, pursuing an MBA or a Degree in Higher Education Management.

Matthew has been fortunate to have the opportunity to be mentored by some incredible people. The mentor who has been most influential in his life at Ohio State has been Gina Hnytka. Matthew says, "Gina has been providing me with career, academic, and life advice since I have come to Ohio State. She has offered me support in all my endeavors and has always made time when I needed her advice. Without Gina, I would have missed many of the opportunities I have been fortunate enough to participate in and would likely not be receiving this award. Her selfless dedication is why Gina Hnytka is my mentor."

