

PRESS RELEASE

RYKACZEWSKI NAMED 2020 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Caleb Rykaczewski of Mentor, Ohio, has been named a 2020 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, recognizing the top graduating seniors from each of the academic units on the Columbus campus,” said Steven Neal, CFAES professor and associate dean for academic programs.

Rykaczewski, an animal sciences major from Lake County, was nominated by college faculty and staff who felt that he personified the award’s attributes of 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.”

Rykaczewski is “truly a Renaissance man,” his nominator, Mariette Benage, CFAES student success coordinator, said. She said Rykaczewski is of “high moral character, inclusive, wise beyond his years, and has a drive and ability to succeed in all aspects of life.”

Among his accomplishments, Rykaczewski was a teaching assistant for courses titled “Reproductive Physiology” and “Diverse Fields and Opportunities Within Animal Sciences,” was a founding member of the Global Design Mission student group, was a facilitator for the Cristo Rey Columbus High School science club, and was vice president of CFAES’ Animal Science Community Alliance.

For a course that looked at human impacts on the environment, he traveled with his classmates to North Queensland, Australia, where they explored ecosystems of the wet tropics, including the Paluma rain forest and the Great Barrier Reef.

Rykaczewski called the Australia trip, which looked at natural resource conservation and sustainable agriculture and industry, the most enjoyable experience of his undergraduate career. It helped him “recognize the importance of preserving these natural wonders,” he said, adding that “as our world continues to change, these matters will remain essential to preserving our way of life.”

2020 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AWARD



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

Academic Programs

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His undergraduate research experience included working in the reproductive physiology lab of Alvaro Garcia Guerra, CFAES assistant professor of animal sciences, where Rykaczewski helped with projects involving beef reproduction and endocrinology.

Rykaczewski also worked with visiting researchers from Australia's Central Queensland University on a study using on-animal sensors to study beef cattle behavior. His research thesis was related to that subject.

After graduation, Rykaczewski plans to pursue a master's or doctoral degree on the physiology and endocrinology of reproduction. He said he hopes to continue his research on developing on-animal sensors for precision farming, and that he's also interested in conservation research—specifically, developing reproductive technologies to try to preserve endangered species.

"I have a passion for educating and hope to one day work for an institution like Ohio State as a professor and researcher," he said. "My life will be well spent contributing to the growth of human knowledge while instructing students in courses and encouraging them to reach their fullest potential."

An awards dinner to recognize all 25 CFAES Distinguished Seniors has been canceled due to COVID-19.

"The safety of our community is our top priority," Neal said. "We are deeply sorry the planned celebration will not occur. The commitment and dedication of these students to their undergraduate education will still be recognized with a special award package that will be mailed later this semester."

In autumn 2019, there were 2,486 undergraduate students in CFAES pursuing 22 majors and 31 minors. Learn more about CFAES academic programs online by visiting <https://students.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/>.



CALEB RYKACZEWSKI

MENTOR, OH

ANIMAL SCIENCES – ANIMAL BIOSCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SCIENCES

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

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