

**PRESS RELEASE****ISABELLA BORRERO NAMED  
2022 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AT  
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Isabella Borrero of Tampa, Florida, has been named a 2022 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 and director of academic programs.

Borrero, a plant pathology major from Hillsborough County, was nominated by college faculty and staff who felt that she 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.”

Borrero served as president of the Phi Epsilon Chapter of Sigma Lambda Gamma International Sorority and spent multiple semesters in the Bennett Species Interactions Lab, work that led to a research experience in Finland. Her dean’s list-level academics, research accomplishments, and volunteer work came while she was working multiple jobs to pay for college, sometimes having to choose between working extra shifts and having time for office hours or study tables.

“Before the pandemic I was still working two jobs part time, one as a work-study student another as a student cashier on campus, while maintaining a leadership role in my sorority, volunteering in the lab, and being a full-time student,” she said.

The pandemic made things worse, but she was able to pick up several part-time jobs to keep things going. She said the bright side to juggling work, studies, research, and volunteering was that it prepared her for graduate school.

“I am now completely undeterred by the idea of working as a lab assistant/TA while doing my program,” she said.

The first in her family to earn a college degree, Borrero plans to pursue graduate studies in plant pathology, plant biology, plant genetics, or agricultural sciences.

“Following that, I hope to either work with the USDA as either a plant resistance researcher or become a

member of an international task force for biosecurity and pathogen genomic research,” she said. “I also have plans to one day have a lab of my own at a university. I have had many people in a position of power reach down their hand to pull me up in order to reach my goals and would love to one day reverse the roles and be the hand reaching down to another student. I believe that I still have a role to play in increasing diversity and inclusion in STEM and see that as an opportunity to do so.”

Due to persisting impacts of the pandemic, celebration of this year’s CFAES Distinguished Seniors took place during a by invitation reception at the Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center on The Ohio State University’s Columbus campus on Wednesday, March 23, 2022. At the recognition celebration hosted by CFAES dean and vice president for agricultural administration Cathann A. Kress and associate dean and director of academic programs Steven Neal, recipients were presented with special award packages. A YouTube video recognizing the award recipients on the Ohio State—College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences YouTube channel was also released on that same day. View the recognition video at [go.osu.edu/CFAES2022DSA](https://go.osu.edu/CFAES2022DSA).

While this year’s recognition took on a varied format from previous years for the 2022 recipients, Neal said, “We were pleased to be able to acknowledge their commitment to their education and dedication to their time as a student in CFAES by recognizing them with the YouTube video, and via social media and professional networking platforms.”

In autumn 2021, there were 2,859 undergraduate students in CFAES pursuing 22 majors and 34 minors. Learn more about CFAES academic programs at [go.osu.edu/B4V2](https://go.osu.edu/B4V2).



## **ISABELLA A. BORRERO**

**TAMPA, FL**

PLANT PATHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT PATHOLOGY

Photo available by sending a request to [flood.13@osu.edu](mailto:flood.13@osu.edu)

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