

PRESS RELEASE**DANIELLE HUTCHISON NAMED
2022 DISTINGUISHED SENIOR AT
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Danielle Hutchison of Lewis Center, Ohio, 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.

Hutchison, a natural resource management major from Delaware 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.”

Hutchison has many academic and research accomplishments to point to, but she describes a six-month break from the university as “the greatest adventure of my life thus far.” She was an AmeriCorps Chainsaw Crew member, doing resource management in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Ohio, including three months as an assistant crew leader.

“The challenges I encountered and the lessons I learned were as diverse and all-encompassing as the family of corps members I met over the course of my service,” she said. “The technical skills I gained through this program are unmatched in terms of preparing me to be a successful natural resource manager.”

She said the experience had a profound effect.

“I recalibrated my approach to life, redefining what it meant to chase my joy,” she said. “I learned about the driving sense of purpose behind each day when you wake up with a mission, and I came to realize that I am happiest when each day is spent engaging my mind and body for the greater goal of conservation.”

While finishing her studies, Hutchison is working for the USDA’s Agricultural Research Service as a biological field technician with the Soil Drainage Research Unit. It was in this position she discovered she was “partial to snakes.”

“I had no prior field experience,” she said of that opportunity. “I never even caught a fish, let alone a snake.”



But after excelling in that position and being promoted to lead biological field technician, Hutchison says she has put aside her doubts.

“I am proud of myself for tackling that self-defeating imposter syndrome, and finally understanding that I am capable of accomplishing whatever it is that I set out to do,” she said.

After graduation, she will continue working full time with the USDA and then travel to Spain and spend at least one month backpacking the 500-mile Camino de Santiago.

After that, “I hope to return to the world of conservation and serve another AmeriCorps term in the Western United States until the 2023 federal hiring season,” Hutchison said.

At Ohio State, as part of the Environment and Natural Resource Scholars Program, Hutchison served as part of the Leadership Council for three semesters and led the program as one of two student co-chairs for a calendar year.

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.

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.



DANIELLE M. HUTCHISON

LEWIS CENTER, OH

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT - PARKS AND RECREATION

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

WRITER(S)

Mark Allen
mark@markalleditorial.com
614-961-9666

SOURCE(S):

R. Warren Flood
flood.13@osu.edu
614-247-6624

