

Press Release

March 11, 2019

McConnell named 2019 Distinguished Senior at The Ohio State University

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Marie McConnell of Pittsburgh has been named a 2019 Distinguished Senior at The Ohio State University's 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 associate dean and director of academic programs.

McConnell, an environmental policy and decision making major from Allegheny County, will be honored at an on-campus awards dinner on March 27 where all 25 distinguished CFAES seniors will be recognized.

The CFAES Distinguished Senior Award honors 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."

Amanda E. Laser, education abroad and academic advisor in the School of Environment and Natural Resources (SENR) and a McConnell nominator, wrote, "When I think of an 'Outstanding Senior,' Marie immediately comes to mind. Throughout her undergraduate career, she has performed well academically, but I am most impressed with her contributions to CFAES, Ohio State, and the greater Columbus community."

McConnell was part of the Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Scholars learning community for high-achieving first- and second-year students interested in environmental sustainability. As a scholar, she volunteered to lead instructional workshops for her peers, participated in service opportunities, planned a backpacking trip, and served as a mentor to incoming first-year ENR Scholars students.

"In addition to her active engagement with the scholars program, Marie also served as a SENR Ambassador," Laser noted. "She helped represent CFAES, SENR, and her major to prospective students. She has been a tremendous asset to our community at large."

McConnell is an active leader on campus and participates in a number of student organizations. She served as president of the Student Sustainability Council, as president and founding member of Women in the Outdoors, and as a chair of the Time for Change Week planning committee. As vice president of the Climate Reality Project at Ohio State, she helped run two grassroots campaigns around climate policy and renewable energy.

Distinguished Senior Award



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

CFAES

She also participated in two education abroad programs, first traveling to Nicaragua, then participating in the first Sustainable and Resilient Tanzanian Community education abroad program. Upon returning, she assisted SENR's recruitment initiatives by sharing her experiences during information sessions.

McConnell completed a number of internships. She worked in environmental conservation as an AmeriCorps volunteer, managed sustainability campaigns with the Climate Reality project, completed a Zero Waste internship at Ohio State, and helped develop the GreenSpot Schools program curriculum for sustainability outreach initiatives in Ohio public schools. She also worked as a sustainability intern with the city of Columbus and crafted its 2017 Carbon Disclosure Project report.

Currently working as a program assistant with Smart Columbus, McConnell is educating the Columbus community about electric vehicles, is researching and analyzing local and national electric vehicle trends, and is assisting with electric vehicle programs across the country including the cities of Orlando, Florida, Rochester, New York, Washington, D.C., and Ft. Collins, Colorado.

After graduation, McConnell plans to stay in Columbus to work in the public or nonprofit sectors in the areas of climate mitigation, energy, and community development.

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Electronic files of head shot for this individual award recipients may be secured by making an email request to Warren Flood at flood.13@osu.edu.