

Press Release

March 11, 2019

Oppliger Named 2019 Distinguished Senior at The Ohio State University

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Andrew Oppliger of Westerville, Ohio, 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.

Oppliger, a forestry, fisheries, and wildlife major from Delaware 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."

Suzanne Gray, assistant professor of aquatic physiological ecology in the School of Environment and Natural Resources (SENR) and an Oppliger nominator, wrote, "Andy exemplifies all aspects of the CFAES mission, including excellence in academics and scholarship, research, service and involvement, and leadership. He consistently receives top grades in all of his classes."

Oppliger has received numerous scholarships and grants including: an Ohio Environmental Science scholarship from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; a Research Experiences for Undergraduates Fellowship from Stone Laboratory; an Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center Seeds undergraduate research grant; and a Sipp Student Research Award from the Olentangy River Wetlands Research Park.

He completed several research projects that focus on understanding the effects of changing water quality on the visual ecology of Lake Erie Walleye, an economically important game fish in Ohio. While conducting research at OSU's Stone Laboratory over two summers, Oppliger frequently gave research briefs and lab tours to groups of OSU administrators, state and federal government officials, and the public.

Oppliger also presented his research at several venues, including The Ohio Academy of Sciences and the Ohio Lake Management Society annual meetings and at the CFAES Undergraduate Research Forum.

Distinguished Senior Award



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

CFAES

“By invitation, Andy also presented his work at the Ohio Sea Grant Winter Program, as an exemplar of the research being conducted at Stone Laboratory by undergraduate students,” Gray noted. “He is a co-author on a peer-reviewed manuscript stemming from his research on Lake Erie fishes and harmful algal blooms. Publishing a paper is an extremely rare metric for an undergraduate and is an excellent indicator of Andy’s potential as a scientist.”

Oppliger has also served in leadership roles as the vice president of the Buckeye Fish and Wildlife Society, president of the Buckeye Student Subunit of the American Fisheries Society, and as an SENR Peer Mentor. He also volunteers with Special Olympics, the Mason Woods Foundation, and Boyer Nature Reserve in Westerville.

An education abroad trip to Iceland afforded him the chance to study the challenges of environmental degradation and environmental decision making on an international scale.

After graduation, Oppliger plans to pursue graduate level academic work in fisheries, leading to a professional position in academia.

Writer:

Sherrie R. Whaley
whaley.3@osu.edu
614-292-2137

Source:

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

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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.