

FAPC students win top senior awards

By Lacie Stockstill
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STILLWATER, Okla. – Student employees at the Food & Agricultural Products Center on the campus of Oklahoma State University recently won top honors among university seniors. The outstanding senior in the department of animal science and the outstanding senior in the department of agricultural education, communications and leadership both are employed at the FAPC.

Ashley Marquart

Ashley Marquart was selected as the outstanding senior in the department of animal science. A native of Bell, Mo., the food science major works in the FAPC food microbiology laboratory under the supervision of Stanley Gilliland, FAPC food microbiologist.

“Ashley is truly an outstanding student,” Gilliland said.

As a two-time Lew Wentz Research Scholar, Marquart presented her research at the 2006 Association of Leadership Educators Conference. Marquart will begin her food science career with Pennsylvania-based Schreiber Foods Inc. upon her graduation in May.

Ruth Bobbitt

Ruth Bobbitt won top honors in the department of agricultural education, communications and leadership, where she was named outstanding senior. Bobbitt works as a graduate assistant in the FAPC communications office under the director of FAPC Communications Specialist Mandy Gross.

“Ruth is well-deserving of this honor and an extremely talented young lady,” Gross said. “I am lucky to have such a hardworking and driven graduate student assist in the communications efforts of the FAPC.”

Bobbitt also was recognized as one of the top 10 outstanding seniors of OSU and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. After finishing graduate school, Bobbitt wishes to continue farming in Lamont, Okla., while utilizing her talents for writing and design to work freelance for agricultural publications.

Other Award Winners

“We are fortunate to have such a quality, accomplished student workforce,” said J. Roy Escoubas, FAPC director. “They provide our faculty and staff with the support they need to make our efforts here at the FAPC efficient and productive.”

Kristi Bishop, an FAPC student administrative assistant, received a senior leadership award through the department of animal science. A native Montanan who was raised on

her family's Hereford ranch, Bishop is pursuing a bachelor's degree in animal science with a minor in educational leadership. Upon graduation, she plans to attend graduate school at OSU.

Stephanie Marak, of Meeker, Okla., was the recipient of both an animal science senior leadership award and a senior scholastic achievement award. Marak credits her work ethic and dedication to her time spent on her family's Milking Shorthorn dairy. She currently works for Gilliland as a lab assistant in the FAPC food microbiology laboratory. Upon graduation, Marak will either continue her education at OSU or enter the dairy food industry as a working professional.

A recipient of an animal science senior scholastic achievement award, food science major Alisha Parsons is a student employee in the FAPC meat pilot plant, working more than 20 hours per week while a full-time student. Parsons is an active member of Block and Bridle and holds a prestigious FFA degree. She plans to continue her education by pursuing a master's degree in food science at OSU with a specialization in byproduct utilization.

Ramanda Stricklin, recipient of both an animal science senior scholastic achievement award and senior leadership award, works in the FAPC food microbiology laboratory under the direction of Gilliland. The Prague, Okla., native grew up on her family's dairy farm, where she learned work ethic and leadership from her parents. This summer Stricklin will travel to Cornell University in Ithaca, NY, to conduct food science research with other students from across the U.S. Eventually, Stricklin wishes to return to the family dairy farm and open her own cheese factory.

Animal science senior award of merit and senior leadership award winner Ashley Sutterfield works with Jake Nelson, FAPC value-added meat processing specialist, and Jason Young, FAPC quality management specialist. The Fort Gibson, Okla., native has served as president of OSU's Block and Bridle Club and Meat Science Association. Sutterfield is continuing her education pursuing a master's degree at Kansas State University in meat science. Her ultimate goal is to remain in academia, earning her doctoral degree and becoming a university professor.

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