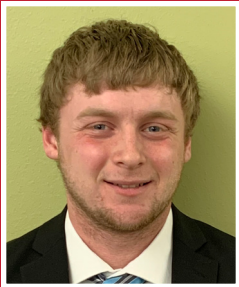




Your CALS Connection For Life

2020 Outstanding Sophomore Award Recipients



Jared Baudhuin • Dairy Science

Jared Baudhuin is from Brussels, Wisconsin. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in dairy science and a certificate in farm business management. Baudhuin worked on dairy farms when he was in high school and developed a passion for the industry. At UW-Madison, he has immersed himself in the student dairy science community. He currently belongs to several student organizations, including the Alpha Gamma Rho (AGR) fraternity, Badger Dairy Club (BDC), Collegiate Farm Bureau (CFB), and the Wisconsin

Junior Holstein Association. He is also the student manager at the Dairy Cattle Center (DCC) on campus.

Outside of his campus involvement, Baudhuin has been a state-certified volunteer firefighter with the Brussels-Union-Gardner Fire Department since 2016. Upon graduation, he plans to complete an emergency medical technician course to further help with emergency situations.

Baudhuin had this to say about UW-Madison and CALS: *"The University of Wisconsin-Madison is one of the top agricultural schools in the nation. It has a one-of-a-kind education due to its location and outstanding leaders."*



Ronni Brent • Microbiology

Ronni Brent comes to UW-Madison from Chicago, Illinois. She is a microbiology major also pursuing certificates in global health studies and leadership. Brent has made the most of her time on campus so far. She is a member of the Posse Foundation, a program that helps train students to be leaders within their communities, Pre-Physician's Assistant Club, and Aspiring Physician's Assistant Association. She was also a participant of the UW-Madison STEM Immersion Program in the summer of 2018.

Through the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP), Brent was selected out of a pool of 300 applicants to work as a research scholar at the University of Illinois at Chicago in the summer of 2019. She helped study the influence exercise has on mood, well-being and cognition. Brent is also currently an undergraduate lab assistant on campus and a certified nursing assistant.

Brent had this to say about CALS: *"The critical thinking skills, academic training and support you receive when you participate in CALS is unmatched by any other program on the UW-Madison campus."*

Meet the 2020 Outstanding Sophomore Award recipients!

Each year, WALSAA names 10 second-year CALS students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as outstanding sophomores. The award focuses on the qualities that truly exemplify an outstanding student, including leadership, service, experience, and academic success. Continue reading to learn more about this year's award winners and why they are truly outstanding.

Since 1972, WALSAA has been THE alumni association of the UW-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) and Farm and Industry Short Course (FISC).

WALSAA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that supports the connection of students, faculty and alumni to the UW-Madison College of Agricultural & Life Sciences.

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Madison Castle • Genetics and Genomics

Madison Castle is from Bayside, Wisconsin, and she is currently studying genetics and genomics. Since she arrived at UW-Madison, Castle has been involved with the Foundation for International Medical Relief of Children, a student-run organization with the mission of helping the underserved and underprivileged children and mothers in developing countries. Castle is currently the organization's volunteer coordinator and she helps recruit volunteers as well as plan fundraising events.

Castle is also an independent researcher in a lab on campus studying mutations in flies. She also recently received her EMT-B license, which teaches recipients how to assess patients and provide basic care.

Castle had this to say about CALS: *"For students applying to college who strive to make a difference in their community and world, CALS is the perfect place because its mission is to tackle the largest problems we currently face."*



Asha Jain • Biochemistry

Asha Jain grew up in Middleton, Wisconsin, and is pursuing a bachelor's degree in biochemistry, as well as a certificate in South Asian studies. Jain has found many opportunities to stay involved on campus. She is currently a member of the Honors Student Organization, India Students Association, South Asian Flagship Languages Initiative, Surma Bollywood Fusion Dance Team, and Waale Acapella Team. Jain also volunteers at St. Mary's Hospital, is a health coach at Wingra Family Medical Center, and a client host at the Middleton Outreach Ministry.

Additionally, Jain has gained extensive research experience on campus. She has helped conduct research in the UW Center for South Asia and UW Department of Chemistry, and served as a summer intern in the UW Department of Urology. She is currently a student researcher in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health and a research assistant in the UW Department of Surgery.

Jain had this to say about CALS: *"The emphasis on research encourages critical and creative thinking, as well as solidifies concepts taught in advanced courses through practical application."*



Caitlin Kestell • Genetics and Genomics

Caitlin Kestell grew up in Bear Creek, Wisconsin, and is currently studying genetics and genomics while pursuing a certificate in environmental studies. Kestell has kept herself busy since she started at UW-Madison. She has worked in several research labs on campus gaining applicable professional experience. She is currently an independent study student in a UW Genetics Department lab working with fruit flies to study mutation rates and fitness consequences. She demonstrated her research at the Darwin Day Tree of Life Event, a family friendly event exploring biological diversity, evolution, and the developmental process.

Kestell has also made the dean's list every semester so far and has worked for the Wisconsin Union Directorate Distinguished Lecture Series since fall 2018. In April 2019, Kestell received the Distinguished Lecture Series Dedication Award for her service to the Union.

Kestell had this to say about CALS: *"CALS is a unique and special college here at UW-Madison. It is a highly ranked college that has not only a multitude of opportunities, but also a sense of close-knit community."*

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Nikita Piryani • Biology

Nikita Piryani is from Mequon, Wisconsin, and has an interest in medicine. To pursue her interest, Piryani is currently studying biology and pursuing a certificate in global health. She has also become quite involved in the campus community. Piryani is an active member of the American Medical Student Association, Badger Volunteers, India Students Association, RaangDe dance group, and Wisconsin Admissions.

Piryani is also a research assistant in a UW School of Medicine and Public Health lab, as well as a math and reading tutor for local elementary and middle school students. Despite being busy with extracurricular responsibilities, Piryani has made the dean's

list each semester and been recognized with several awards for her academic achievements.

Piryani had this to say about CALS: *"As a student in CALS, I can not only partake in excellent academic courses taught by experienced professors, but also be an involved member of the college."*



Grace Puc • Environmental Science

Grace Puc comes to UW-Madison from Downers Grove, Illinois, and she is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in environmental science and a certificate in environmental studies. Since coming to UW-Madison, Puc has dedicated her free time to exploring her passion for environmental science and sustainable food systems. She has helped remove invasive species on the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, helped plan and run an after school science enrichment club at a local elementary school, and joined the Community of Environmental Scholars Program. She is also currently doing research on seed germination in the UW Department of Horticulture.

Puc is also currently the president of the UW Campus Food Shed. This student-run organization coordinates the collection and distribution of surplus produce and other foods from grocery stores and research farms to help reduce food waste and campus food insecurity. The collected items are available to UW-Madison students, staff and faculty in several areas around campus.

Puc had this to say about CALS: *"In my opinion, no other college at this university exemplifies the Wisconsin Idea like this one."*



Olivia Pusch • Animal Science and Genetics and Genomics

Olivia Pusch is from Rubicon, Wisconsin, and is pursuing bachelors' degrees in animal science and genetics and genomics. Looking at the organizations Pusch is a member of, you can tell she has a passion for agriculture. She is a dedicated member of the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWA), CFB, the Hartford FFA Chapter, and the UW-Madison Saddle and Sirloin Club, where she is currently the chair of the showmanship committee and treasurer-elect. Pusch is also a member of the Wisconsin State Dairy and Animal Science Quizbowls, and she has helped plan the Badger Kick-Off Classic, Badger Bonanza Lamb Show, and Little International

Horse Show.

Pusch stays busy with work as well. She is an independent research student studying DNA methylation and the impact it can have on fertility in cattle, and she also started her own herd of Wagyu and Angus cattle in 2014.

Pusch had this to say about CALS: *"My time in CALS has allowed me to gain all the benefits of a large, Big Ten University as well as all the great things that a tight-knit, passionate group of learners has to offer."*

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**2020 Outstanding
Sophomore Award Recipients**





Mia Roccara • Animal Science

Mia Roccara comes to UW-Madison from Staten Island, New York, and she is currently studying animal science. Roccara came to UW-Madison as a member of the Posse Foundation Leadership Program and has dedicated a lot of her time to the UW School of Veterinary Medicine. So far, Roccara has worked in two different labs in the UW Vet School studying different types of cancer in dogs.

Outside of school, Roccara has volunteered at several veterinary practices as well as the Staten Island Zoo. She is also a member of the UW-Madison Pre-Veterinary Association and is currently the fundraising co-chair. In this role, she helps organize the organization's annual Canine Campus

Crawl that raises money to benefit the Dane County Human Society.

Roccara had this to say about CALS: *"Being a part of CALS at UW-Madison helps students accomplish goals inside and outside of the classroom. Between the research opportunities, the generosity in scholarships, and the vast alumni network, CALS stands out among other programs at UW."*



Katherine Satori • Biochemistry

Katherine Satori is from Manitowoc, Wisconsin. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in biochemistry with a global health certificate, and she is also a declared pre-medicine student. Satori has worked hard to maintain a perfect GPA while exploring all UW-Madison has to offer. She is currently the outreach chair for the UW-Madison Chapter of the American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and a member of the Alpha Epsilon Delta Pre-Health National Honor Society.

Satori is also a member of a lab in the UW Department of Biochemistry, where she helps research bacterial interactions as they relate to infections and fiber utilization. When not busy with school work or student orgs, Satori volunteers at the American Family Children's Hospital and her church, and she is also a member of the UW-Madison Swim Club.

Satori had this to say about CALS: *"CALS is unique in that it is a 'campus within a campus.' Students get the benefits of a large university while also getting the personalized help and attention of a small college."*

Congratulations to all of our 2020 Outstanding Sophomore Award recipients!

We are proud of all of our 2020 Outstanding Sophomore Award recipients and look forward to what they will accomplish in the years to come. We would also like to thank all of the applicants for this year's award and wish them good luck as they finish school.

The ability for WALSAA to provide this type of support is at the core of its mission and solidifies its connection to CALS. Starting with donations and continuing with annual silent auctions, WALSAA has been able to generate continued scholarship support over many years to deserving students of CALS. If you are interested in supporting students and advisors, visit www.WALSAA.org.