CALS Class of 2012

Senior Portraits

From naming one of the top species of 2012 to empowering young women in Tompkins County to addressing malnutrition in the Andes, the works of these 12 CALS seniors represent and reflect the breadth and depth of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences itself.

More photos will be on display in Roberts Hall during graduation weekend, and then in Mann Library Gallery.

Photos: Kent Loeffler | Text: Ellen Leventry '95 & Hannah Stamler '12
At 5 years old, Arjun Potter was the youngest member of the New Haven, Conn., bird club. At 22, he is one of only a handful of people to have studied the white-naped Tit, and he will be writing his honors thesis on this rare bird. This summer, the natural resources major will be researching endangered wild cattle on the island of Java while on a Fulbright Scholarship.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/arjun

For Rachel, Facebook posts, text messages, and emails are more than just a daily ritual—they are a microscope through which to view personality disorders. A communication major, her senior honors thesis analyzes the language used in social media in relation to psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism. After graduation, she will be applying the research skills she’s learned at CALS as an analyst at The Nielsen Company.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/rachel

Not only does plant sciences major and orchid taxonomy enthusiast Alfonso have an orchid named after him (Maxillaria x doucetteana), but his recent description of one of the flowering plants, Dracula immunda, recently garnered a nomination for the 2012 “Top Ten New Species” list compiled by the International Institute for Species Exploration. These honors recognize his work toward a career in plant systematics, in which he hopes to discover why orchids are such a diverse family.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/alfonso
Shauna-kay Rainford

Born in Jamaica and raised in Florida, Shauna-kay saw first-hand the effects of air and water pollution on both urban populations and sensitive eco-systems. Coming to Cornell as an engineering student, the Hunter R. Rawlings III Presidential Research Scholar soon decided to pursue her passion for conservation as a natural resources major, examining the effects of 24 different plants, including the white pine, on the American toad. This past summer she presented her findings at the Ecological Society of America conference.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/shauna-kay

Claudia Pazlopez

Claudia’s passion for food comes from her parents: her father’s Peruvian roots and her mother’s sensitivities to certain food preservatives. While her mother’s allergies prompted her to start asking questions about food design, her current research focuses on the nutrition of high-altitude communities in developing nations in South America. When not combining science with social justice, this Hunter R. Rawlings III Presidential Research Scholar takes part in Institute of Food Technologists design competitions.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/claudia

Lee Carlaw

At the age of seven, Lee strapped himself to the roof of his Bethesda, Md, home so he could witness first-hand the wonder and power of a violent thunderstorm. While no longer strapping himself to buildings, Lee, an earth & atmospheric sciences major and broadcast meteorologist for Ithaca College’s television station, is still fascinated with severe weather and will be researching how improvements in radar tracking systems can save lives as global climate change affects storm intensity.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/lee

Shauna-kay Rainford
Caitlin Dreisbach
When Caitlin transferred to CALS her sophomore year, she wasn’t sure what she wanted to study. Three years later, she has created a completely unique program combining communication, biology & society, and a minor in global health. After spending a semester in Nepal, she has incorporated her experience into an honors thesis about the transition of traditional and western medicine in the rural Himalayas.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/caitlin

Casey Knapp
From Organic Valley’s “Generation Organic” to TEDx in Manhattan, Casey isn’t your grandpa’s dairy farmer. Hailing from a family of farmers who transitioned from conventional to organic milk production, this animal science major has attended conferences and gatherings in the U.S. and abroad on food and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and national agricultural policy. After graduation, he plans to head to Texas or California to pursue opportunities in the industry.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/casey

Matthew Linderman
When Matthew leaves the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, he’ll already have a great portfolio thanks to internships at Citigroup and Deloitte and Touche. But it’s one extracurricular in particular that will make his resume stand out: founding the Cornell Business Review. From start-up to campus establishment, the magazine, which covers business issues and trends relevant to Cornell students and alumni, now has a run of over 3,000 copies a semester.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/matt
Varisty gymnast Kaitlin confronted her epilepsy the same way she approaches her favorite apparatus, the balance beam: face on. Co-founder of FACES (Facts, Advocacy and Control of Epileptic Seizures), the neurobiology & behavior major helps those with epilepsy and their families cope with seizures, raises awareness about their social and psychological effects, and combats the stigma surrounding the condition. The group also manages Cornell’s first student-run laboratory, which conducts research as well as mentoring and educational programs for Ithaca youth.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/kaitlin

Janet Nwaukoni
Janet may hail from Springfield Gardens, N.Y., but her heart lies with the young ladies of Project Lansing. The biology & society major started the initiative to provide female mentors to residents of the Lansing Residential Center, a juvenile detention facility for women ages 13-17, located just north of Ithaca. Mentors teach lessons on nutrition, physical awareness, HIV/AIDS education, etiquette, CPR/First Aid, dancing, singing, and beauty in order to prepare these young women for futures full of possibility.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/janet

Won Joon Seol
Joon knows a thing or two about dedication, following in his grandfather’s and father’s footsteps in the family landscape architecture business and returning to CALS to finish his landscape architecture degree after a two-year hiatus serving in the Republic of Korea Marine Corps. Joon is just as dedicated to creating innovative sustainable landscape design that reintroduces nature to urban environments and provides eco-friendly park and recreation space.

More: periodicals.cals.cornell.edu/joon