

Sophia Chau

Graduation Year: Junior

College: Science

Major(s): Environmental Science

Minors(s): Sustainability

Scholar Group Membership: No

Did you received other funding for this project?: No

Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding? No

More details on CUSE funding assistance?

Project Title: Urbanization of lakeshores: are we decreasing the supply of food to top predators in inland fisheries?

Project Location: Miami University, Oxford, OH

ND Faculty Mentor: Dr. Dominic Chaloner

Project Type: Conference - Presentation

Why did you undertake this project/experience? Prepare for graduate school (MA or PhD), Career discernment and/or preparation

Did your funded experience help you:

[Deepen your understanding of your coursework or field of study]: Yes

[Discern your interests and post-bac goals]: Yes

[Become confident in your ability to set and achieve your goals]: Very Much

[Gain a more nuanced view of local, national, or global communities]: A Little

[Improve your written and verbal communications skills]:A Little

Tell us about your experience.

At the Midwest Ecology and Evolution Conference (MEEC), I attended oral presentations by graduate and undergraduate students from around the Midwest and discussed my research interests with ecology professors. The oral presentations that fascinated me the most were those on pollinators and their role in ecosystems, since this topic is consistent with my current research. I was able to exchange ideas with my peers and learned new and unexpected ways of approaching ecological concepts. Attending the panel on Careers Outside of Academia helped me realized there are many career options available to me as an ecologist and provided resources to guide me in finding the right career for me. Presenting my research through a poster presentation helped me become better at explaining my research in a relevant, clear, and engaging way, which is vital for effective science communication. It was also exciting to talk with Notre Dame alumni there who shared similar research experiences up at the ND Environmental Research Center.

Describe the impact this project had, both on you as a student-scholar and on the people you worked with.

