

Dear Dr. Semler,

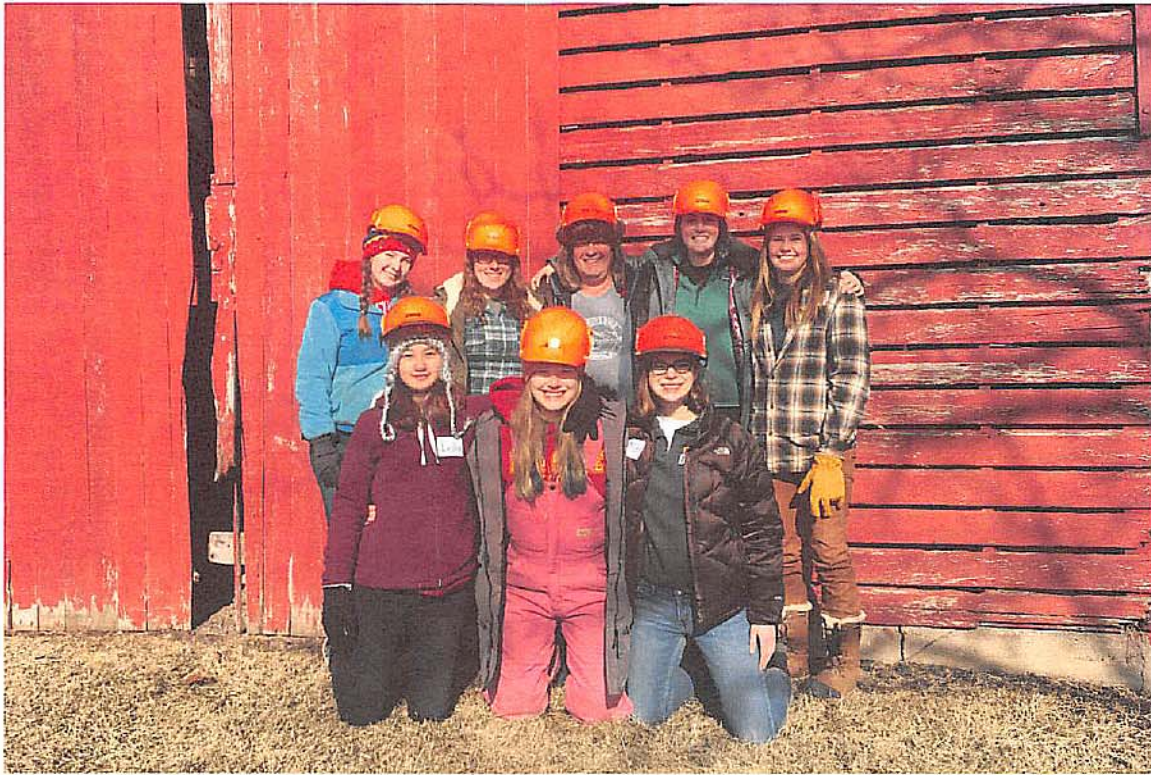
My name is Olivia Rauen and I am a recipient of the Iowa Woodland Owners Association Scholarship. Let me begin by saying I feel honored to receive this award. I am a junior in Forestry specializing in Natural Resource Conservation and Restoration. Originally from small-town Northeast Iowa, I chose to study at Iowa State University because of its incomparable natural resource programs and broad availability of classes. While at Iowa State, I've become very involved in the NREM department as a peer mentor for incoming students and will be a teacher's assistant for our Dendrology class this fall. I have also had the privilege of working in several research labs, including the most recent, a soil and water quality lab studying erosion and saturated and unsaturated buffers. I have dedicated my extracurricular time to the ISU Forestry Club, of which I am currently president. It has been a privilege to enable and encourage other students to participate in professional development activities and provide networking opportunities. Being involved in the club has taught me so many career and life skills as well as provided me with great friends, hobbies, and pride for our program.

As I approach my last year in college, I have begun to really develop goals for my future career. I would like to do consulting within Iowa for private landowners who are looking to enhance their property and increase sustainable practices. I am interested in both agricultural land and forest. I understand the importance of both in our landscapes and believe there can be a healthy balance between the two to enhance our land. I have spent time working with landowners through the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and have loved the experience. I can see the pride I feel for my family's land reflected when they speak about their own properties. It is this passion that drives me to work with landowners to help them manage and take care of their land.

Being the recipient of this award means that I can focus on my studies without the burden of education costs. I plan to spend next year gaining my Pesticide Applicator's License and Chainsaw Safety Certificate and this award will help me fund those certifications as well as help me go to professional development conferences such as the National Society of American Foresters Conference. These certifications and experiences will boost my resume and make me very marketable in the field. The rest of the scholarship will be used for housing. I greatly appreciate your support of my education and am thrilled to be entering the natural resource and conservation field.

Yours sincerely,


Olivia Rauen



Olivia Rauen at Snyder Heritage Farm near Elkhart at an Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation work day. Many of the students from the Freshman Learning Community that I peer mentor came out to help remove invasive honey suckle, raspberry, and multiflora rose from an Oak/Hickory savanna. It was exciting to see them learning some of these skills for the first time with a foundation I am so involved in. Olivia is in the back row, far right side.
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