



## Anna Dispensa

**Major:** Elementary education

**Activities:** Club Ed, Delta Chi Theta sorority, Augustana Concert Band

**Internships:** Chelsea and Westminster Hospital School in London, England; the Alpha Primary School in Kingston, Jamaica; and the Starlight Children's Foundation in Sydney, Australia.

**Post-grad plans:** Work as an elementary school teacher in the Chicago area

“I still remember meeting Anna as a prospective student and was glad to become her academic advisor when she declared an elementary education major. I was impressed by Anna's enthusiasm and focus right from that first meeting. If anything, her enthusiasm has increased at Augie as she demonstrated a total commitment to becoming an excellent teacher through her engagement in classes, field experiences, campus activities and study away programs. I have truly enjoyed my interactions with Anna and look forward to hearing all about the adventures to follow! Thank you, Anna, for coming to Augie!”

— Dr. Randy Hengst, professor and director, elementary education

### MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

#### Why Augustana?

I knew Augustana was a great school since both of my parents attended Augie. But, I ultimately decided to attend Augustana because I knew I wanted to be an educator, and Augustana has an amazing teacher education program. I was able to graduate in four years as well as study abroad, an opportunity that many other schools did not offer for education majors.

#### Are you where you thought you'd be when you first came to campus?

No way! Coming into Augustana, I never imagined that I would be able to study abroad three times and graduate in four years with an elementary education degree. From my opportunities both abroad and on campus, I have gained so much experience in regards to my field and developed so many professional skills that I would have never expected.

#### Who helped you get to where you are now?

I have had an amazing support system here at Augustana that has helped me to get where I am today. All of the professors in the education department have been so encouraging as well as willing to help me in any way possible. Additionally, my advisor, Dr. Hengst, has been immensely helpful in ensuring that I had incredible internship opportunities and would still graduate on time. Finally, I own a huge debt to my family for always supporting me to chase my dreams of becoming a teacher.

#### Peak experience?

A peak experience for me was Augustana's Australia trip and my internship in Sydney, Australia, with the Starlight Children's Organization. I worked with children in a hospital setting doing both educational activities and fun activities and developed many skills that will help me as a future educator. Also, I immersed myself in another culture and embraced cultural differences, allowing me to develop a more global perspective.

#### What surprised you?

I have learned how much of an impact my professors have had on my education. I am grateful to have had such amazing opportunities to learn from and collaborate with them. I never imagined that I would create professional relationships with my professors that will extend years after I graduate.

#### How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to intern at the Alpha Primary School in Kingston, Jamaica, with education professor Dr. Egan as well as about 20 of my peers. On this trip, I saw how the Jamaican school system worked and observed in different grade level classrooms. I also worked with the students! This opportunity allowed me to challenge my ideas about the traditional American schooling system and embrace new ideas about international schooling systems.

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## What will you miss the most?

The sense of community that I have felt on the Augustana campus over the past four years is definitely something that I will look back on and miss. Augustana really has become my home away from home, and I will miss the amazing faculty and friends that I have made here at Augie.

## Advice for the Class of 2022?

As clichéd as it sounds, challenge yourself and try new things! I have learned so much from pushing myself out of my comfort zone and embracing multiple study abroad experiences that I will take with me for the rest of my life.