



Abi Buchanan

Majors: Anthropology, history

Activities: Society for Anthropology and Sociology Students, Augustana Yarn Club, Phi Alpha Theta (history), Phi Beta Kappa

Internships: Practice Velocity medical billing intern (2015-current); Texas Medical Center–Research Medical Library, archives intern (summer 2017); Augustana history department intern (2017-2018)

Post-grad plans: I am fortunate to have received a full-ride at Michigan State University for its doctoral program in anthropology. I will specialize in medical anthropology and have a four-year teaching assistant fellowship position with the anthropology department.

“Abi has always demonstrated a maturity about her academic work that has made her stand out. When I first met her, she was a reserved first-year student. Now she has grown into a (deservedly) confident and insightful classroom contributor, writer and peer reviewer. Abi’s strong anthropology Senior Inquiry project is a solid foundation on which to build her graduate career, and I’m so excited to see what Abi does with her talents after Augie!”

— Dr. Carrie Hough, associate professor, anthropology

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I wanted to attend a smaller college where I would get to interact with both students and faculty consistently as opposed to a larger university where lecture halls host 200+ students, and faculty members treat you more like a number rather than a person. Coming to Augie, I was able to connect with the faculty better, and because they knew their students well, they were able to tailor their teaching material according to our strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, I was very interested in studying abroad as traveling was something I always wanted to do, and none of the other colleges seemed to promise I could do that type of experience AND graduate on time.

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

I never thought I would accomplish so much during these four years. I was timid about being on my own when entering college and wanted to do these big things like travel the world and take on internships. So I was nervous about those dreams being too far away and afraid they would be just dreams. Fortunately, I came out of my shell by taking awesome classes, connecting with faculty members, and finding new friends, and through that, became more confident in myself and my abilities. That confidence gave me the courage to try new things and continue seeking new avenues to learn.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

Honestly, much of the credit is to my parents and family. Without them, I don’t know if I would financially and emotionally have been well off to travel to Europe or apply to internships. They have supported and continue to support me through everything I have done, and I owe a lot to them for the person I am today.

Peak experience?

If I had to choose, it would be going on the last Augie Ireland Term. When I came here as a prospective student, that was the one trip that I knew I wanted to do, and I am so grateful that dream became a reality. Ireland was monumental to me for so many reasons. I got the opportunity to travel pretty much everywhere there. I was present for the Centennial Celebration of Irish Independence. I explored the Ring of Kerry and all its beautiful sights. I learned about The Troubles in Northern Ireland and met one of the Bloody Sunday victim’s family members and hear their side of the story, and I actually got to climb a mountain and visit Queen Maeve’s Gravesite. I did so much on that trip but feel that I have only scratched the surface. I cannot wait to return to Ireland someday.

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What surprised you?

What surprised me is that if I put my mind to something, I have the ability to enact on it and make it a reality. I never thought I would have the confidence to go abroad or be able to do half of the things I did on/off campus these last four years. If you can dream, you can do it, and I wholeheartedly encourage others if there is something that interests them— pursue it! Live with no regrets!

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to go on Ireland Term. I was able to not just go to Ireland but also to London and Glasgow for three days each with my friend as well! With Augie Choice, my 11-week trip to Europe actually cost me next to nothing but gained a lifetime of fun and wonderful memories.

What will you miss the most?

I will miss the friends within my cohorts. We spent four years together in the same classes and have done so much together as a group that it's difficult to say our goodbyes and go our separate ways.

Advice for the Class of 2022?

Take every opportunity that is presented to you. You might be surprised where that opportunity guides you!