



Natalie Trujillo

Majors: Psychology, sociology and women's & gender studies

Activities: Chi Omega Gamma sorority, +IMPACT

Internships: I interned at the Child Abuse Council from April-July 2015 and WQPT Quad Cities PBS from Oct 2016-May 2017.

Post-grad plans: I've been accepted in the Lutheran Volunteer Corps (LVC) program, and I will be a case manager at the Network for Victim Recovery in Washington, D.C., beginning in August.

“I still remember Natalie when she declared women's and gender studies as her major. She was a bit shy and very soft spoken. She is still soft spoken, but over the years, I have seen a fiery feminist growing inside. She took on a leadership position when traveling with me to India. And as it is very natural for her, she created +IMPACT on campus. Natalie truly has the heart to help others and make a difference. I am waiting to see where this will take her. Good luck Natalie, and I will miss our conversation about women's roles and the craziness of the world!”

— Dr. Umme Al-Wazedi, associate professor, English

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I chose Augustana kind of unexpectedly. I came for a Visit Day in April of my senior year, mostly as a last-minute backup kind of thing, and was blown away by how beautiful the campus was and how friendly the students were. Everything just kind of clicked, and I knew that this was the place I needed to be. Admissions and financial aid were so amazing with helping me and my family navigate the college process so that I, a first-generation student, could come to a school like Augustana.

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

Not even close! I have accomplished so much in my four years that I never thought possible. When I first came to campus, I had no idea what I was doing or where I would end up and I've surpassed every expectation I have had for myself and grown in more ways than imagined.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

SO MANY PEOPLE! I think my two biggest supporters and mentors are Umme Al-Wazedi and Jennifer Poppo. Umme is my advisor and has guided me through my time at Augie in so many ways; academically, personally and professionally. She has supported me and given me the motivation to do big things. Dr. Poppo really came into my life during my study abroad to India. Since that time junior year, she has challenged, encouraged and supported me in amazing ways. Without her I never would have started +IMPACT and would never have believed in myself to apply for LVC.

Peak experience?

My peak experience was my study abroad trip to India my junior year. It was the first time I really stepped out of my comfort zone and did something completely unknown to me. I learned a lot about myself and grew tremendously as a person. This trip was by far my most memorable experience and completely life-changing in the best way. Without this trip, I don't think I would be where I am right now.

What surprised you?

I learned that I am capable of so much more than I give myself credit for. I realized that my weaknesses can actually become strengths if I simply change the way I look at situations. I learned that I am a force to be reckoned with and that standing up for things I believe in and are passionate about can create enormous change.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice on my study abroad trip to India for two weeks during spring break.

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What will you miss the most?

My sorority! These girls have been the biggest support system during my time at Augie. They have been there for me during every triumph and every failure; ready to put a smile on my face and have me laughing in no time. Simply seeing red coats around campus brings a smile to my face. These ladies have changed my life in the best way, and I am grateful for my COG family.

Advice for the Class of 2022?

Do something that terrifies you, challenges you, and surprises you. Your time at Augie will go by faster than you ever imagined, and before you know it, you'll be standing in the same place as me. Break down every barrier you have created for yourself and do something amazing because you're capable of great things; you just don't know it yet.