



Victoria Witkowski

Majors: History, anthropology

Activities: Zeta Phi Kappa sorority, Society of Anthropology and Sociology Students (S.A.S.S.), varsity swimming

Internships: The Augustana Teaching Museum of Art, where I curated a display of inkstands from a large collection donated to the school a few years back. I also was a museum intern at the Baldpate Inn in Estes Park, Colo., the summer before senior year where I worked with the world's largest key collection.

Post-grad plans: I will head back to the Baldpate to work there for the season, until about mid-October. Then I'll stay in Colorado and work, establishing residency so I can attend graduate school for museum and field sciences within the next few years.

“Like a lot of students, Victoria came to Augustana wondering where her academic path would take her. After she discovered anthropology and history though, she realized that a very practical application of her interests would be a career in a museum setting. Her double major was a perfect fit for her, and she has pursued her goals with determination. We look forward to hearing where her Augustana education takes her in the future!”

— Dr. Adam Kaul, associate professor,
anthropology

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I originally chose Augustana because the education program was amazing and I could still graduate in four years. I also came from a very small school so Augie was a perfect size for me. I liked the smaller class sizes, and I was also able to continue competitive swimming as that has been a huge part of my life.

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

Yes and no. When I first came to Augie, I wanted to be a history secondary education major, but the summer after freshman year, I realized that wasn't the path I wanted to take. So on the recommendation of one of my professors, I took an anthropology class winter term of sophomore year with Dr. Kaul and declared my major within two weeks. It was definitely the best choice for me as it opened many opportunities in museum work for me to explore, and I am now working toward a career in that field.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

So many people have helped me get to where I am now, and I can't thank them enough. Professor-wise, Drs. Ellis, Leech and Kaul have encouraged me my entire academic career and helped me along the way. My friends, teammates and sisters have been with me every step of the way as well, and I'm so grateful for their love and support. Finally, my parents need to be mentioned since they gave me the opportunity to go away for college to Augie and have encouraged me to push myself outside my comfort zone and take every opportunity given to me.

Peak experience?

It's a little hard to pinpoint an exact best moment at Augie since my four years here have been absolutely full of amazing experiences. But the first couple that come to mind are going to the Berliner Dom [Berlin Cathedral] on my study abroad trip to Germany and the training trip to California with my swim team over fall break of junior year.

What surprised you?

Not to sound too cliché, but I think that college is where you can learn a lot about yourself, and I definitely did. I learned that I can do so much more than I ever thought I could with help from my friends and family and lots of perseverance and dedication. I pushed myself a lot these last four years, and I'm more capable than I give myself credit for sometimes.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to study abroad in Germany for three weeks the summer after my sophomore year. We went to Berlin, Leipzig and Weimar, visiting places that we talked about in the history and philosophy classes we took spring term before going. The Berliner Dom was breathtakingly beautiful, and visiting all the museums in Germany was a really cool experience as well given the career I'm pursuing. I'm so grateful for all the friendships and memories that stem from that study abroad!

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What will you miss the most?

What I'm going to miss the most is the people. I've met my best friends here, and since I'm moving out of the Midwest after graduation, it's going to be weird not being a 10-minute walk away or even just walking downstairs to be around my friends. The closeness of the Augie community definitely fosters an amazing experience that I don't know if I'd have gotten anywhere else, and I'm definitely going to miss it.

Advice for the Class of 2022?

I'm full of clichés I guess, but try new things in college! This is a chance to figure out things you like and don't like, so if something sounds even remotely interesting to you, do it! If you decide it's not for you, no one will make you stay. I can't even say how many times some amazing opportunity has presented itself to me because I put myself out there!