



Allison Brinker

Major: Elementary education (with K-12 Reading Teacher Endorsement)

Activities: Camp Kesem, Chi Alpha Pi sorority

Internship: Student teacher in a fifth-grade classroom at Butterworth Elementary in Moline, Ill.

Post-grad plans: Find a teaching job in an upper elementary classroom in the Quad-City area

“I have had Alli in several literacy methods courses and supervised all of her clinical experiences. She is part of the first group to graduate with a Reading Teacher Endorsement. Alli took on the extra challenge because of her desire to learn more about reading and to be more prepared entering the education field. Her hard work and determination will ensure that she is successful. I am thankful that I had the opportunity to be a part of Alli’s educational experience at Augie!”

— Dr. Danielle Beliveau-Derion, assistant professor, education

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I wanted to attend a school that would know me as an individual and not just another face in the crowd to be shuffled through the motions until graduation. When I went on my overnight visit to Augustana, I had a special sense of belonging on campus despite the fact I wasn’t a full-time student yet.

The next morning I had the pleasure of attending the Beginning Teachers Workshop. I saw how many Augie grads went on to have a variety of successes in the teaching field, and I heard how valuable their experiences at Augustana were to their success. After this visit, I knew I would not find a better fit for myself than Augustana.

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

Not even close, and that is the best realization I’ve had in reflecting on my time at Augustana. I knew I wanted to be an education major, but I did not realize the variety of other experiences inside and outside the classroom I would encounter. I had the wonderful privilege of serving as the Camp Kesem director for two years and presenting my research at the Illinois Reading Council Conference. These are things I would not have imagined I would be able to do.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

Each person I have encountered at Augustana has helped me get where I am today. The family I found within Camp Kesem helped me build my confidence in being a leader and develop strong interpersonal skills. Every person in the education department has helped me get to where I am today. Each one influenced me in a way that shaped the future educator that I will be.

Peak experience?

If I have to choose just one, it would be from this past fall. A few of my education classmates and I had the wonderful opportunity to present research at the Illinois Reading Council Conference in Peoria, Ill. Being able to present our research was a true testament to the value of an Augustana education. Attending the conference as pre-service teachers was a meaningful experience and helped me gain new ideas to bring to my future classroom. It helped to further shape my beliefs about the importance of literacy and provide me with more tools.

What surprised you?

I learned that I am capable of more than I could have ever imagined. When I came to Augustana, I never expected to become the leader I am today. I became involved in so many organizations on campus and through them, I held a variety of leadership roles. Positive peer pressure was vital to my college experience. I built relationships with people who encouraged me to push myself to try new things and get involved in roles I would not have had the confidence to dive into when I arrived on campus.

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How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to cover expenses during student teaching. Having the opportunity to student teach in a fifth-grade classroom during senior year of my undergraduate experience was extremely enriching to my education, allowing me to be fully hands-on in a classroom. Without Augie Choice, this experience would not have been possible.

What will you miss the most?

The sense of family I have found at Augustana—from the strong community within the education department to my close friends who support me on a daily basis. I cannot imagine entering next year without each of them by my side. While I know everyone will be a phone call away, it will be a tough transition.

Advice for the Class of 2022?

Try everything that you find remotely interesting and never underestimate your abilities. You are capable of more than you could ever imagine, especially with the help of all the people at Augie.