



## Gabby Gambino Lyon

**Major:** Engineering physics

**Activities:** Office of Student Life and Leadership, Augustana Physics and Engineering Society, Delta Chi Theta sorority

**Internship:** 2016 summer internship in Houston, Texas, with Pepper Lawson Construction and Ziegler Cooper Architects

**Post-grad plans:** I will begin work mid-June with Webber Commercial Construction in Houston, Texas, as a full-time field engineer.

“Gabby has been an incredible student and leader during her time at Augustana. She has studied abroad in Siena, Italy, and on the Alps program. Gabby has helped me grow as an instructor by providing insight on the experiences of women in engineering and how I can improve my classes and teaching to retain women in engineering. She has also inspired other women to continue on in engineering. Gabby has accepted an offer as a field engineer in Houston, and it will be fun to watch her lead in the engineering profession.”

— Dr. Joshua Dyer, associate professor, engineering physics

### MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

#### Why Augustana?

Augustana made it happen for me. I was a graduating high school senior with way too many interests and no sure plan of what I wanted to do with my life. I wanted a college that helped me feel a part of a community. It was because Augustana made such an effort to make me feel wanted and desired that I ended up choosing Augie.

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

I was not sure what I saw myself studying when I arrived on this campus. I imagined following my passion for travel and majoring in international business and possibly minoring in a foreign language. I signed up for a Spanish class and was ready to pursue that path when I met with my first-year advisor for the first time. Little did I know, Dr. Dyer was the engineering physics advisor, and it was this initial meeting that shaped the course for the rest of my college career.

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

Dr. Dyer has been the single driving force in helping me succeed as an engineering student. His dedication to his students as well as his passion for creating room for women and minorities in engineering are the main reasons I kept with it all four years. There were many times I considered how difficult the future would be for myself, as a woman, in this field and how easy it would be to stop and try a new major. It was the support I received from Dr. Dyer that helped me dig deeper and never give up.

#### Peak experience?

I had the privilege of studying abroad twice while at Augie. Once to Siena, Italy, for fall term 2015 and once to Germany, Austria and Switzerland for three weeks in the summer of 2017. The experience that changed my life for the better was the term I spent in Siena.

The Italian culture and way of life have made me appreciate this world so much more; I see the beauty in life I often overlooked before. I allow myself to slow down and appreciate the ones I love and the people who surround me far more than maybe some. Learning new languages has taught me to listen closer when people are speaking.

I have a greater appreciation for myself after that trip, too. I am far more capable than I know and traveling the world pushes me to act more confidently and carry myself with greater purpose. Siena is my favorite place on Earth; the people truly care about their city and their way of life. The food is made with such care and passion. I consider this place another home, because I certainly left a bit of my heart there.

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### What surprised you?

I have learned that one of my favorite things to do is conquer my own fears. Whether it be overcoming my fear of speaking to large crowds by leading Homecoming Week for two years or safely getting myself back to Italy after being stranded in a Parisian airport with very little money and no knowledge of the French language, I find such pride and self-worth in my ability to face challenging situations head-on with the mentality that I will overcome.

I was considered a very shy, quiet person in high school, never leaving my comfort zone or putting myself out there in ways that caused me discomfort. I recognize this privilege, and made it my mission in college to practice putting myself in challenging situations in order to equip me with the tools and confidence necessary to act in love and peace for those who cannot act for themselves when the time comes.

### How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to pursue my passion for travel and participate in my second study abroad trip to the Alps in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

### What will you miss the most?

I will miss the people of Augustana the most. I am so thankful for every single person I came into contact with either on this campus or through this school because every single person has taught me something about who I truly am, what is important to me, and where my passions are. They have guided me, supported me, challenged me or acted as a mirror for me to better reflect on who I am. They've been with me to laugh and cry, study, and create memories I'll look back fondly on forever.

### Advice for the Class of 2022?

Always walk this Earth in kindness and in truth. Honesty, whether easy or difficult to hear, spoke in kindness will take you anywhere. It has been the sole virtue that I have tried to impart in my life over the last four years, and I believe it has gotten me very far...in academics and pursuit of my career and in love and relationships.