



Adiba Hasan

Majors: Religion, political science

Activities: Búhos, Augie International Club, Micah House

Internship: American Bar Association–Commission on Immigration in Washington, D.C.

Post-grad plans: Summer fellowship with Haas Institute at UC-Berkeley and then pursue the Masters in Global Affairs at the University of Toronto this fall!

“Adiba represents the best in a liberal arts student. She is interested in a lot of topics and disciplines, and she is intellectually curious about everything. It was a real pleasure having her as a student in my classes because she thinks deeply, finds connections across topics and between these and her lived experience, and is an excellent problem-solver. Adiba has also made fighting social injustice in her communities a crucial goal of hers. She has a promising future ahead of her.”

— Dr. Mariano Magalhães, professor,
political science

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

The bottom-line: they gave me the most scholarship money. But the story seems to amuse a lot of people.

I was applying to a bunch of different places, and I spent a lot of money for the application fees and then realized there were schools without an application fee. Went through the A-list on the Common Application, and Augustana was somewhere at the very top of that list. Augie replied the fastest with the most scholarship money. With no doubt in my mind but just determination to pursue education in the United States, I embarked to Augustana College.

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

I am definitely not where I thought I'd be. I came in thinking that I was going to be a nurse, but after multiple conversations with the one-and-only Keri Bass, I realized that it was not the route to take. I didn't think I would have the opportunity to explore different states and meet so many intelligent and motivated people. I didn't think I would situate well in a small community, but I learned that it was not about the size of the community but rather the people who made the community.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

My parents, sister Synthia and best friend Bashara, who motivated and helped in navigating the application process. Linda Golden and Mark Pealstrom, who were always encouraging even in times of confusion! My professors Dr. Dan Morris, Dr. Cyrus Zargar (an intensely humble mentor), Dr. Chris Jones, Dr. Mariano Magalhães, Dr. Meg Kunde and Dr. Brian Lovato, who have supported me and continue to do so, and given me the inspiration to keep working hard.

Dr. Eric Stewart, my mentor, also my biggest strength throughout my time at Augustana. He opened my eyes to so many things, constantly challenged my thoughts and encouraged me to see things from various perspectives. Eric and his family supported me whenever I needed it, but also reminded me of the abilities I have and things I can do to make a difference in my surroundings. Dr. Sonia Zarco-Real has listened and guided me and has been pivotal in enhancing my leadership skills. Dr. Umme Al-Wazedi, a role model, looked out for opportunities to further my experience as an international student [from Bangladesh]. Her family welcomed me with open arms, and they have been a great support to my family at home.

Liz Nino, who jumped in front of the Skype screen before I accepted Augie and assured me about the college. She has been a key advocate for international students on campus and has always looked out for us. Keri Bass, Pastor Kristen, Clarissa Thompson, Lisa Slater and Rebecca Marion-Flesch were amazingly caring, extremely helpful and crucial to my success at Augustana.

Also, the HR/Payroll team who always heard my complaints and rants, and also taught me so much about the culture here and listened to the important decisions I had to make during my four years.

Adiba Hasan

Majors: Religion, political science

Activities: Búhos, Augie International Club, Micah House

Internship: American Bar Association–Commission on Immigration in Washington, D.C.

Post-grad plans: Summer fellowship with Haas Institute at UC-Berkeley and then pursue the Masters in Global Affairs at the University of Toronto this fall!

Peak experience?

There were so many that it is hard to pick one. Here are two of my peak experiences:

My American Bar Association (ABA) internship gave me the opportunity to learn about the U.S. immigration system and also enabled me to assist those facing hardship and displacement. Regardless of the reason people were in detention, talking to them reminded me that they were more than just an identification number...they were human beings in confinement trying to fight the system without getting any legal help. Their life experiences made me more aware and appreciative of the privileges that I as a brown, international, female student have—something as mundane as having the privilege to walk wherever and whenever.

The experience at the ABA was even more impactful because of my humble supervisors Robert Lang and Karen Castillo, who later became our (the interns') mentors and friends to this date.

Secondly, the ESL classes that are now known as Búhos was an idea I had taken to Dr. Sonia Zarco-Real and my peers, who really pushed through and made it successful. We teach English to people around the area, and this allows Augustana students to be a part of the Floreciente community and build relationships outside of the Augie community. We don't go with the intention of just teaching but also to learn from the lived experiences of our students. This has helped me grow exponentially and has continuously motivated me to teach and learn with compassion.

What surprised you?

What I thought were weaknesses turned into strengths that I keep learning from. Not being able to relate to one particular culture or country made me feel like a stranger, but I learned to use that ambiguity to my benefit as I have sort of the outsider and insider perspective! This will continue to be my challenge, but the learning opportunities from this challenge are invaluable.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice for the internship in Washington, D.C., which helped cover a lot of my expenses.

What will you miss the most?

I will most definitely miss my faculty and staff on campus. The relationships I built with everyone are extremely valuable, and I learned so much from each of them!

Advice for the Class of 2022?

Seek the opportunities that are available, and stay positive and motivated even when things don't seem to go your way. Every single step at college is a learning opportunity, whether it is successful or not. Be humble in your approach and question with genuine curiosity! One of the things I learned living in Micah House (intentional living) from my friend/housemate Rachael Meadors is to get comfortable with the feeling of being uncomfortable, and you will learn so much more!