



Abbie Norris

Major: Biology (pre-optometry)

Activities: Augustana Dance Company, Augustana Community Health Outreach Organization (ACHOO), Augustana Student Medical Reserve Corps (AS-MRC)

Internship: During my junior year, I shadowed two eye doctors for a term. I built a great relationship with them, and I worked as a tech a couple a times a week at the office!

Post-grad plans: Attend the Illinois College of Optometry in Chicago (entering her second year in the fall)

“I’ve known Abbie as both an advisee and as one of the founders of the Augustana Student-Medical Reserve Corps (AS-MRC), an on-campus extension of the county MRC that can be mobilized to respond to local disasters. Abbie was the mastermind behind the AS-MRC Zombie Run as a way to promote disaster preparedness awareness within the campus community. As a 3:4 optometry scholar, Abbie graduated from Augustana with her BA in biology and her first year of optometry school completed!”

— Dr. Dara Wegman-Geedey, professor, biology

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I was very attracted to the small size of Augustana. What sealed the deal was when I found out that it has a 3:4 optometry program, allowing me to go to optometry school an entire year early, which helps me to save time and money.

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

Yes! I made it my goal to get into optometry school a year early the day I got to campus, and I was able to do that through a lot of hard work!

Who helped you get to where you are now?

Dr. Dara Wegman-Geedey, my advisor, helped me to make sure that I took all the right classes so that I had all the requirements for optometry school, and Augie, my family and friends helped to support me the whole way through.

Peak experience?

One of my favorite accomplishments was planning a Zombie Run with the Augustana Student Medical Reserve Corps. This walk had tables set up along a course; participants picked cards at each table to create the best disaster preparedness kit. I had put a lot of time into preparing for it my sophomore year, and it was rained out. Fast forward to my junior year with more time and effort put in, and we accomplished a successful event! It’s something I am really proud to have done.

What surprised you?

I always thought of myself as strong and independent, and college has assured me that I still am, but I also learned that sometimes it’s okay to need help from others. Whether it’s a hug from a friend on a rough day, a call back home or a long chat about life in the CSL, it’s okay to have people to lean on and to know that it is okay to accept that life doesn’t always go the way you may hope. I was surprised to find out how you don’t always have to be so independent.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to go to Rome the summer after my junior year!

What will you miss the most?

I will definitely miss dancing with the girls in Dance Company. I have danced throughout my whole life, and was so happy to be able to continue it at Augie. As much as some nights the last thing I wanted to do was to go to dance, the wonderful ladies I danced with always made practice worth the time and energy.

Advice for the Class of 2022?

Don’t let nerves get the best of you. Socially or academically, walk into this whole new life confidently. Don’t be afraid to take a really hard class or a class that you know nothing about.

Everyone will tell you to go out and meet new people and definitely do that, but if it takes you a little longer, don’t worry about it! (And to quote the wonderful Dr. Seuss: “Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don’t matter and those who matter don’t mind.”)