



Semhal Berhe

High school: Ethio Parents School

Hometown: Hometown: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Majors: Economics; business administration-finance; business administration-marketing

Activities: African Student Association; Dining Services supervisor

Internships: TFAS-Ronald Reagan Institute, Washington, D.C.

Post-grad plans: Grad school

“I have had Semhal in three of the classes she has taken for the economics major. She has been nothing but a pleasure to work with. What is most remarkable about Semhal is that although she’s far from home (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), she has maintained a level of dedication to her studies that is truly amazing. I am anxious to see where life takes her and wish her nothing but happiness and success.”

— Dr. Chris Marmé, professor and chair, economics

Why Augustana?

Augustana in my view is one of the best schools an international student should join if they plan to come to the United States. The experience and memories I have with faculty as well as friends are unmatched.

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

I am beyond and above where I thought I would be when I first came to Augie. I have stretched and matured in every aspect of life. If I was asked four years ago how I would turn out in the coming years, I would never have thought that I would grow as much as I have.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

More than anything God helped me get to where I am now. He has put me in different situations that I thought I wasn’t capable enough to be in, but his grace has helped me pass through them.

Secondly, the encouragement I received from my family has made me evolve into a different person in each season. Finally, both faculty and friends that I have at Augustana played a great role in my growth journey.

Peak experience?

One of my peak experiences was the internship I found through the school. I was able to receive full funding through The Fund for American Studies (TFAS) for the internship I secured through the Ronald Reagan Institute. I worked at the political firm called The Madison Coalition, and the knowledge I acquired from it is immense.

What surprised you?

What surprises me the most is how the school is able to maintain and satisfy all international students with their specific cultural needs.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice for the internship I did last summer in D.C. with the Ronald Reagan Institute.

What will you miss the most?

What I will miss the most is knowing that I’m always surrounded by the campus. The fact that I’m on campus made me always know that I can either run to the library to study, go to the CSL if I’m hungry or even go to my professors’ offices when I need help.

Advice for the Class of 2026?

Don’t limit yourself to a certain box. When I first came from Ethiopia, I had certain beliefs about myself. But with exploring different things, I have come to know that a person can master different things at once.