



## Fatima Dominguez

**High school:** Belvidere North High School

**Hometown:** Poplar Grove, Ill.

**Majors:** History; political science

**Minors:** Latin American Studies; Spanish

**Activities:** Latinx Unidos, PACE mentor for the Office of Student Inclusion and Diversity (OSID)

**Internships:** Law Office of Dolores Tapia P.C., in Moline, Ill.

**Post-grad plans:** I will be working as a foster mom for a year at the Hands of Hope House Parent Program at Casa de Esperanza in Houston, Texas.

“I first met Fatima on Augustana’s Journey to Selma. During the trip, I was struck by her curiosity as she pulled me aside to ask incisive questions about our nation’s complex history with race. Since that time, I have seen Fatima become a forthright advocate for herself and others. I am sure that as she leaves Augie she will be a driving force for thoughtful, sensitive change.”

— Dr. Lauren Hammond, assistant professor, history

### Why Augustana?

I chose Augustana because they gave me the most financial aid. Besides that, the location was perfect. It was not too far away, but not too close to home, giving me space to grow as an individual. The campus itself is also beautiful and spacious despite it being a small campus.

As a liberal arts institution, Augie also gives their students the freedom to explore various fields, which is something that I wanted since I was still unsure coming in what I wanted to major in.

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

I am definitely not where I thought I would be. When I first came to Augie, my path seemed to be linear. Eventually, that linear path became non-linear.

As medical issues started impacting my life, I found myself in a different position than the one I thought I would have been. I would have never imagined having to go through surgeries and several doctor appointments while in college. Despite all this, I finished strong. One word: perseverance.

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

I am indebted to so many people who helped me get to where I am now. First and foremost, I want to thank God. Without the strength that he gave me through all these years, I do not know where I would be now. After him, I want to thank my family. They have been my biggest support and my backbone throughout my college experience.

Additionally, I want to thank my history advisor, Dr. Hammond; my political science professor, Dr. McClerking; and attorney Dolores Tapia, who opened the doors to her office to me and mentored me. I want to also thank Ashley, Letty and Daisy from the OSID office. Without these mentors in my life, I would have not accomplished all that I did these four years.

Lastly, I want to thank the community of friends who have supported me through this journey, especially my best friend, Francis Sophia Gow. She saw me through my darkest moments and always pulled me back up. I am forever grateful for our friendship and blessed to have her in my life.

### Peak experience?

My peak experience was the J-term I took for an EDUC Program in Jamaica. Seeing my colleagues at work made me consider the EDUC path.

As I walked the oceanside, I felt a rush going down my spine into the soles of my feet. I felt like my feet were magnets on the sand. The sand and my feet made a connection so strong, it wouldn’t let go. As I gazed at the ocean, the waves moving so freely, I was reminded of myself. I saw myself reflected through the rays of the sun that glared down at the ocean.

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### What surprised you?

What surprised me was my willpower to come as far as I did. My ultimate goal in this life is to leave a mark. I want people to remember me as the woman who fought through everything and broke the chains that have tied down her ancestors for so many years. I strongly believe that I was able to do just that. I was able to leave my mark here.

### How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice for my internship with an immigration attorney, Dolores Tapia. Augie Choice helped cover my costs such as transportation, food and professional clothing. I am so grateful that Augie gives their students the opportunity and freedom to use the money for things such as internships.

### What will you miss the most?

What I will miss the most is the Quad-Cities community. The Quad Cities opened its arms to me and gave me endless opportunities while at Augie. When I first came, I felt homesick. I started going out to the community in search of a community that I could call home.

From being a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church, to campaigning with Thurgood Brooks, through the various jobs I held in the Quad Cities, I was able to find my second family. Thank you QC, I will miss you!

### Advice for the Class of 2026?

Say "yes" to new opportunities. Do not let fear hold you back from pursuing your dreams. Let your passion take over and use that passion to pursue the life that you want for yourself. The universe gives its battles to its toughest soldiers.