



Destiny Payne

High school: Lisle Senior High School

Hometown: Lisle, Ill.

Major: Sociology (social welfare)

Minor: Communication studies

Activities: Multicultural Programming Board, Black Student Union

Internships: Augustana's Office of Student Life

Post-grad plans: Pursue a graduate degree in higher education and student affairs

“Destiny is spring in full bloom. She has had tremendous impact on the students and staff engaged with the Office of Student Life. Initially a bit shy, Destiny stepped outside her comfort zone and soon after, our entire community benefited. Always focused on learning, she role-modeled leadership at its best. She shared her keen understanding of the complexities of our world while helping others to see how they too could have impact. I am thrilled to see Destiny take the next step in her journey to become a student affairs professional.”

— Ken Brill, associate dean and vice president

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2020

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I decided to go to Augustana because it was a reasonable distance from home and had the small class size that I wanted, but most importantly, I chose Augustana because of the people. From the moment I stepped on campus for my first tour, the environment was very welcoming and all the students were very friendly. I also got to interact with faculty, and I knew I could thrive academically in this environment.

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

I'm definitely not at all where I thought I would be, but I'm exactly where I am supposed to be! I came to Augustana with no idea of what to major in and very few ideas of what I wanted to do. With Augustana's liberal arts education, I got to try out so many different things in and outside the classroom that allowed me to grow and become the person I am today.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

I have a laundry list of people who have helped me get here; it truly takes a village. First I credit my faith. My family, more specifically my mother, father and sister for their unwavering belief in me and unconditional love and support. (My extended family is just as important in getting me here but I don't have enough space here.)

Next would be my friends I have made along the way, for always being there and holding me accountable in all aspects. I would also give credit to my high school English teacher, Mr. Sally, for introducing me to Augustana and encouraging me to apply.

I would credit my success at Augustana to my advisor Dr. Croll, for always being honest and pushing me to grow in all ways. Also Ken Brill for giving me a space where I could find my future profession and encouraging me to always have excellence and show love. Finally, I would give credit to Michael Rogers for being a person I can go to and validating the experience of students of color like me.

Peak experience?

I've had so many amazing experiences at Augustana. If I narrowed it down, I would say living in Seminary my first year and my OSL experience senior year. Living in Seminary was a peak because I truly made lifelong friendships that played a role in me staying at Augustana. Truly had great memories in Seminary and built a community. My senior year in OSL was something amazing! I was blessed with so many opportunities and was able to challenge and prepare myself for my future in student affairs.

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What surprised you?

I think I was most surprised by all the opportunities I was presented with, both inside and outside the classroom. My experience was really whatever I wanted it to be! Looking back, I am also surprised about the power of my voice and what speaking up can do. I've grown so much in four years, and this is only the beginning.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to do a summer internship in the Office of Student Life, where I gained so much perspective on what life in the field would be like!

What will you miss the most?

I will miss the "Augie bubble." Augustana has an environment on campus that I don't think I can find anywhere else. I'll miss walking into OSL and seeing some of my favorite people. Then walking to the Brew and seeing all my other favorite people. I'll miss having someone I know and can talk to no matter where I go. The people and relationships you build are truly what make Augustana such a special place!