



Madison Williams

High school: Kirksville High School

Hometown: Kirksville, Mo.

Major: Multimedia journalism and mass communication

Minor: French

Activities: Augustana Observer student newspaper, Concert Band

Internships: Mediablaze (London), NewClub Golf Society, Augustana's Office of Communication and Marketing

Post-grad plans: Attend Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism for my master's in sports media

“Madison exudes a quiet excellence. She leads by example with professionalism and humility. She excels because of innate talent, hard work and persistence. Under her leadership as sports editor of the Observer, the sports section was exceptional. Her passion for sports journalism leads her to pursue graduate studies at Northwestern University, where she will undoubtedly thrive. Madison exemplifies the best qualities of a journalist and a person, and I'm excited to see her impact on the field and the world.”

— Dr. Carolyn Yaschur, assistant professor,
multimedia journalism and mass communication

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2020

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

Augustana wasn't originally on my list of schools, but since my parents are from the Quad Cities, I decided to add it last minute. When I went on my first tour at Augustana, I instantly fell in love with the beautiful campus, even with all the steep stairs to climb! I could tell instantly that the students and staff were willing to help me with any questions I had, and they made Augustana feel like home right away. It was the only college I visited where I felt like I belonged there.

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

In many ways, yes. I came in wanting to be a sports journalist and because of the experiences I had at Augustana, I'm continuing on that career path. I reported on sports every week for the Augustana Observer student newspaper, completed a multimedia senior project and found multiple internships. I didn't have much journalism experience before college, and Augustana gave me the outlets to build my confidence in my profession.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

First, I would like to thank my incredible family and friends for always supporting me and my opportunities. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for their confidence in me. I am fortunate that most of my extended family lives in the Quad Cities, so I had continued support on campus as well!

I am grateful for all my professors, but more specifically, my MJMC professors, Dr. Carolyn Yaschur and Dr. David Schwartz. They answered any questions I had and were always willing to help, either by editing an article I wrote or assisting me through the graduate school decision process. I grew so much as a student, journalist and person because of their guidance. I know that I will have a bond with them for years to come.

Peak experience?

Most of my fondest memories come from reporting for the Augustana Observer newspaper. During my sophomore and junior years, Augustana hosted the first couple rounds of the NCAA Division III Basketball Tournament, and I was able to report at all the games. Sitting courtside at a Sweet 16 game for the newspaper was not an experience I could have had as a sophomore at a bigger school. This peak experience gave me the opportunity to receive state journalism awards for the articles I wrote.

What surprised you?

Before starting Augustana, I thought I knew the Quad-Cities area pretty well. However, I began discovering new places with friends, gaining a new appreciation for the Quad Cities! People from big cities complain there isn't much to do in the Quad Cities, but there are a lot of fun activities and restaurants to go to (a Whitey's ice cream run never hurts!).

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How did you use Augie Choice?

I spent my last semester interning in London through the IES Study Abroad program. I was able to use my Augie Choice to help pay for the program. Living in London was by far the best experience of my life, and I am thankful that Augustana could help fund that amazing adventure.

What will you miss the most?

Old Main! As a humanities major, I spent most of my time there, and I love hearing the bells chime. Apart from that, I will miss the community at Augustana. There's a general acceptance of everyone and you can feel that the people around you care about you here. I know the support will continue for Augustana graduates as they leave, and that is a comforting feeling.

Advice for the Class of 2024?

If you are passionate about something, try it out. This is the time to explore your passions and discover what you want to experience in life. I may have known, but I still explored other activities and classes because Augustana gave me the opportunity to do so, and I don't regret that one bit!