



## Alejandra Raya

**High school:** Moline High School

**Hometown:** Moline, Ill.

**Majors:** Communication sciences and disorders, French, Spanish for professional use

**Activities:** Latinx Unidos, Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity

**Internships:** Three terms of being a student clinician at the Augustana Center for Speech, Language, and Hearing

**Post-grad plans:** Continue at Augustana to pursue my master's in speech-language pathology

“Alejandra represents the best of Augustana students. Being a local student who is the first person in her family to attend college, Alejandra demonstrates the success that focus, determination and sustained effort brings. She is not only graduating having completed three majors, but having invested herself in numerous volunteer experiences and a study abroad program. Alejandra has remained an unassuming and generous person throughout her four years at Augie. We especially look forward to the substantial academic, clinical and personal contributions she will make to our master's program!”

— Dr. Kathy Jakielski, professor,  
communication sciences and disorders

## MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2020

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

### Why Augustana?

I had attended Augustana's Summer Academy for speech pathology. The clinic and classroom experiences were great, and the overall campus was beautiful. I live in Moline, and my Summer Academy experience was the first time had ever seen the Augie campus! Also, Augustana is close to home. I have a very strong relationship with my family and the Quad-Cities community. It is an area that is very accepting and diverse, so I made the easy and great decision to stay in the area.

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

I was nervous to begin my undergraduate education as a first-generation college student. It is easy to be overwhelmed with uncertainties even if your high school résumé proves you wrong.

I have grown to be an educated Latina by pushing myself and by listening to the advice of family, friends and advisors. I came into Augustana with a plan. A triple major was definitely not part of it, but it is a great finale to my undergraduate journey.

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

My family is my greatest supporter. My parents and grandparents have played a major role in my college experience. They have created and nourished my sense of wonder and adventure.

My advisors and professors have also played a major role in my educational success. My clinical supervisors and CSD professors have helped motivate me to continue my studies in speech-language pathology.

The Spanish and French language departments have been a source of constant support. They have always pushed me to challenge myself and to take advantage of my college experience.

### Peak experience?

My peak experience is, without a doubt, my study abroad experience in Ecuador. While in Cuenca, I had the most amazing host family. I still get in touch with them after two years! This unique exploration of another culture was incomparable. Through this experience, I became more culturally aware, formed important relationships, and gained a greater appreciation for my Spanish-speaking abilities.

### What surprised you?

Being a commuter, I continued to have normal daughter, granddaughter and big sister duties. I thought it would be difficult to find a sense of belonging on campus, but I was wrong. I have some pretty great friends. I also learned that it is okay to change your plans. Have faith in yourself, and everything will be okay!

## MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2018

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## How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice for my study abroad trip to Ecuador.

## What will you miss the most?

Although I will not be leaving Augie, I will miss my amazing friends. I will miss the five-minute conversations during my runs to the clinic, the late-night study dates and the volunteering. I am eternally grateful to Augie for the friendships I have come to cherish.

## Advice for the Class of 2024?

Take advantage of your time at Augustana to challenge yourself and to be your best self! *Échale ganas.*