



Jill Humecke

High school: Wheaton North High School

Hometown: Wheaton, Ill.

Majors: Environmental studies, geography

Activities: Varsity cross country, varsity track & field

Internships: New Zealand study abroad internship at Enviro-Mark Solutions

Post-grad plans: Something related to sustainable development, urban planning or sustainability coordinator/manager

“It has been wonderful to see Jill progress as a runner, from 103rd at the NCAA DIII Midwest Cross Country Championships last year to 29th and All-Region this year. In track, she went from 5:43 in the mile two years ago, to 5:08 this season and won the CCIW Indoor Conference Championship and qualified for the National Championships! As a team captain, she sets the tone with her work ethic and care for her teammates. Jill also excels in her major and spent the spring semester doing an internship in New Zealand, while keeping up her training.”

— Dr. Colin Young, instructor and assistant women’s cross country and track coach

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2020

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I loved Augustana because I truly felt at home when I was on campus. Everyone I met throughout my application process was so welcoming and helpful. I knew I wanted a school where I could focus on academics while also being able to participate in the extracurricular activities I loved. The cross country girls that recruited me went out of their way to reach out to me frequently. I also wanted a liberal arts school because I wanted to explore my options before deciding on a major.

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

Not at all. I knew I wanted to run in college, but I was undecided in my major and was leaning toward doing something with music since I loved band so much. But after taking other classes, I realized my passions lie in sustainability. I was welcomed into the environmental studies and geography departments, and I have learned so much about the world in just a few years. I’m a completely different person than I was four years ago thanks to all the diverse perspectives I’ve been introduced to.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

I owe so much of who I am to my family, friends and teammates who have supported me through everything. I am also very grateful for my professors and advisors from the geography and environmental studies departments who have supported me in so many ways and who continue to guide me down my career path.

One of the biggest influences during my time at Augie has been Dr. Colin Young, my cross country and track coach. His optimism, dedication, work ethic and fun personality inspire me to make the most of any situation given to me. The unwavering support and encouragement he has given me during my time here has had a lasting effect on me.

Peak experience?

My peak experience was definitely going to New Zealand during spring term of junior year to complete an internship. Not only did this opportunity give me more work experience in my field, but I also learned so much about living on my own and exploring new places and cultures. I was afraid to be away from home for so long, but I had so many people from Augie reach out to me during my study abroad that I still felt included in what was happening back on campus.

What surprised you?

What has surprised me the most is how comfortable I have become with who I am. I was very shy and quiet in high school, but I have become much more confident in myself and in my abilities.

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How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to fund my internship in New Zealand.

What will you miss the most?

I will miss the people the most. Everyone here is so friendly and supportive. My teammates have become my family, and I plan on staying in touch with them for a long time.

Advice for the Class of 2024?

Do what makes you happy, and don't be afraid to try new things. Choose your majors and campus involvement based on your passions instead of just doing something because it's practical or convenient...because the best things in life often come with hard work.