



## Olivia Carroll

**High school:** Geneseo High School

**Hometown:** Geneseo, Ill.

**Majors:** Communication studies, political science

**Activities:** Sigma Pi Delta sorority (honorary member), Pi Sigma Alpha political science honor society

**Internships:** Office of Congresswoman Cheri Bustos, Office of Senator Richard Durbin, AMIDEAST, National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations, Herb Schultz for Rock Island County State's Attorney

**Post-grad plans:** TBD—currently searching for job opportunities in Washington, D.C.!

“Olivia personifies hard work. This matched with her intelligence, maturity, wit and integrity means that every classroom, office, group and relationship she enters is better for it. Olivia is not only a deep thinker, but a pragmatic doer. Her summer 2019 internship with the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations in Washington, D.C., is just one instance where Olivia has shown her commitment to immersing herself in important socio-political matters, a pattern that is sure to continue after she graduates.”

— Dr. Meg Kunde, assistant professor,  
communication studies

### MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2020

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

#### Why Augustana?

I spent my first two years of college at Black Hawk Community College, where I earned my associate degree. During my last semester at Black Hawk, I was dual-enrolled at a larger university where I planned on finishing the rest of my bachelor's degree. Ultimately, I did not end up staying at the larger university because I did not feel that I was developing the close relationships with my professors and peers that I desired. The sense of community at Augie provided me with that and more!

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

Absolutely not! I was initially worried about transferring to Augustana as a junior. However, everyone welcomed me with open arms. I quickly made friends and found that the professors here genuinely care about their students. Before beginning my journey at Augustana, finding new friends was not at the top of my list, but I can truly say that I have built lifelong friendships here. I am even an honorary member of a sorority! Augustana has helped me grow in ways that I never expected.

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

So many people have helped me throughout my personal, academic and professional career. My family has always instilled in me the importance of education. They have never stopped believing in me, and their words of encouragement have pushed me to persevere through the tough times.

My professors have also offered me so much support and, most importantly, pushed me out of my comfort zone. Whether it was Dr. Kunde prompting me to think about complex questions from a nuanced perspective or Dr. Zhang telling me to apply to my dream internship first and figure out the logistics later, they were always pushing me to grow as an individual.

#### Peak experience?

My peak experience was realizing that I was going to D.C. for a summer internship. All of my professors were so determined to help me get there, and once I arrived in D.C., they made sure I had a network of Augie alumni to connect with. It was an amazing experience.

#### What surprised you?

I was surprised by how close-knit the Augie community is. I was also surprised by how much professors cared about each of their students. I felt comfortable reaching out to my professors if I was having a hard time or just needed some advice.

#### How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to help pay for living expenses while interning with the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations and AMIDEAST in Washington, D.C., the summer before my senior year.

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## What will you miss the most?

I will miss being surrounded by friends. Living right down the street from my friends has been a blessing. I can always count on them for a listening ear, entertainment and laughs.

## Advice for the Class of 2024?

Connect with your peers and professors! Although the academic component of college is very important, connections are an added bonus. I have found that professors are some of the most fascinating people!