



April Tran

High school: HNUE High School for Gifted Students

Hometown: Hanoi, Vietnam

Majors: Mathematics, computer science

Activities: Beling Scholar, Pi Mu Epsilon (mathematics), Al-Khwarizmi Honor Society, math tutor, Phi Beta Kappa academic honor society

Post-grad plans: I will be attending University of Colorado Boulder for my Ph.D. in applied math.

“April is one of the most highly motivated mathematics students I have encountered in my career at Augustana, and I believe she has the knowledge, passion, dedication and experience necessary to be an outstanding graduate student in the future.”

— Dr. Andrew Sward, assistant professor, mathematics

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2021

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I honestly didn't know why I decided to come to Augustana. I guess sometimes you just have to try things to see if they're good. It did turn out really well for me though. It's been the best four years of my life, and I would 100% choose Augustana again without a doubt!

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

Not even close! I honestly never thought I would be who I am right now. I also didn't think I even liked math or wanted to do math for a living. But now I'm super excited to spend the next chapter of my life pursuing a Ph.D. in applied math.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

I want to dedicate a special thanks to Dr. Sward for helping me 'chase' my dream. Without him and his endless support, I would never have achieved what I have right now. He is not just a professor or an advisor, he is also one of my best friends on campus, and I'm forever grateful for having him as a part of my college experience.

I also want to thank Dr. Clauss for sparking my interest in math. 'It all started from that calculus class' – that's what I always tell him. His energy and enthusiasm changed how I view math, and of course, my life.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Stacey Rodman, Dr. Bengtson, Dr. Stonedahl, and everyone else in the math and computer science department. They've always been there to support me, and I will always be grateful for them my whole life.

Lastly, I want to thank my family and friends for supporting me since day 1. I wouldn't be the same without them, and I am really thankful for having them in my life.

Peak experience?

It's hard for me to just pick just one, but I would say my peak experience was when I got to go to Cincinnati for MathFest 2019 to present my research. It was my first national math conference and being able to communicate about my research was truly eye-opening for me at that time. Plus, hanging out with the math department was a lot of fun, too!

What surprised you?

I'm surprised about how much I'm going to miss Augustana. I'm not saying this as someone who had low expectations coming in and was pleasantly surprised that they enjoyed themselves, but as someone who gets restless and finds themselves fantasizing about new places and people. Augustana became my home.

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How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to do research with Dr. Sward over the last summer, which resulted in a presentation at the Joint Mathematics Meeting 2021 and a paper that just got accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal! It was unpaid, and having Augie Choice to cover rent and food helped a lot.

What will you miss the most?

The people here! I will miss my weekly afternoon talk with Sward, I will miss Clauss's energy, and I will miss Stonedahl's ranting. I will also miss my friends and all the food we made together. I will miss my life here, too.

Advice for the Class of 2025?

Always try your best, even though sometimes it seems pointless! Your efforts and dedication will pay off. Also, talk to Sward!