



## Amanda Schar

**Majors:** Psychology, Scandinavian studies

**Activities:** Jenny Lind Vocal Ensemble, Augie Catholic, Psi Chi psychology honor society, Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity

**Internships:** (1) Rick's House of Hope, (2) SafePath and (3) Center for Youth and Family Solutions

**Post-grad plans:** I've accepted a position with the Mercy Volunteer Corps and will be spending a year as an outreach worker/case aide for Project HOME in Philadelphia.

“When I came to interview for my job, Amanda was one of the student representatives to take me to lunch in The Gerber Center. She stood out immediately as a quality student and person. In the spring of her junior year, Amanda studied in Sweden. Uppsala University is a world-class institution, and often a place where American students can struggle. Not so for Amanda! She is also generous with her time, and the students who seek her help as a tutor for Swedish say she is a wonderful teacher. Amanda invests her all in everything that she does. I am a big fan.”

— Dr. Mark Safstrom, assistant professor,  
Scandinavian Studies

## MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2019

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

### Why Augustana?

I was looking for a small campus where I would have a sense of community and support from my professors. CORE caught my eye when I first visited campus, and I also loved the fact that each time I came back the Admissions team remembered me and made me feel welcome. It was home before I even applied!

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

I couldn't have imagined that this is where I would be four years ago. Three internships, two research projects and one semester abroad later, I've experienced more than I ever thought I would. I came to Augie to learn how to be a psychologist; I'm leaving as so much more than that. Augie has taught me how to pursue my passions, how to stand up for what I believe in, and how to be a lifelong learner. I'm not where I thought I would be; I'm somewhere so much better.

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

I've been fortunate to have so many wonderful mentors. Dr. Eric Stewart was one of my freshman Honors professors, and he has been instrumental in encouraging me to dig deeper and to challenge myself. He taught me to interrogate my beliefs and to not be afraid to be proven wrong.

Dr. Mark Safstrom was one of my Scandinavian studies professors, and he has shown so many times that he believes in me by giving me opportunities to challenge myself. He has asked me so many times to do things that I'm afraid to say yes to, but his encouragement and support has helped me grow so much.

### Peak experience?

Participating in the Honors Program was one of the best things. I met most of my closest friends in the program, including my roommates for sophomore through senior year. I also had professors who became wonderful mentors. Those were the professors whose offices I could stop into whenever I needed advice or just for a chat. Honors really built a community for me that challenged and encouraged me throughout my time on campus.

### What surprised you?

I learned that I am so much more capable than I give myself credit for. There have been many times when I've been thrown into a situation where I didn't think I knew what I was doing, only to get to the other side and realize not only had I gotten through, but I had done a good job.

Did I think I knew what I was doing when I led the pre-teen group on my own at Rick's House of Hope? Not at all! Did I have any idea what I was getting into when I moved 4,000 miles away from home for half a year by myself? Nope! But both of those experiences were amazing.

## Amanda Schar

**Majors:** Psychology, Scandinavian studies

**Activities:** Jenny Lind Vocal Ensemble, Augie Catholic, Psi Chi psychology honor society, Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity

**Internships:** (1) Rick's House of Hope, (2) SafePath and (3) Center for Youth and Family Solutions

**Post-grad plans:** I've accepted a position with the Mercy Volunteer Corps and will be spending a year as an outreach worker/case aide for Project HOME in Philadelphia.

### How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to study abroad in Uppsala, Sweden, for a semester. It was one of the most incredible experiences of my life! I got the chance to travel, make wonderful friends who I still talk to, and experience living in a small European city. It definitely brought my Scandinavian studies major to life and showed me I was more independent than I thought.

### What will you miss the most?

I will miss the community. I love that anywhere I go on campus, I see a friendly face. I love sitting in the Brew and talking to whoever passes by. Augustana has become such a home for me, and I'm going to miss all the people who have helped it become that.

### Advice for the Class of 2023?

Ask hard questions. Figure out why you believe what you believe. And don't be afraid to change your mind. College is a special place because you're surrounded by people who come from different places than you, and all of you are trying to figure it all out. Take the time to have conversations with people you disagree with, and challenge yourself to try to understand where they're coming from. Knowing who you are and what you believe in will help all the other pieces of your life fall into place.