



## Lauren Amella

**High school:** Whitney Young Magnet High School

**Hometown:** Chicago

**Major:** Communication studies

**Minors:** Studio art, Chinese

**Activities:** Varsity lacrosse (Academic All-Conference), Delta Chi Theta sorority

**Post-grad plans:** This summer I will be a human resource intern at Crowd Strike, a cyber security company in Sunnyvale, Calif.

“I’ve had Lauren on the lacrosse team since she was a freshman, and it’s been amazing seeing her grow and thrive at Augustana the last four years. She’s a great leader and a kind person, and is sure to be successful in whatever she decides to do next. She’s always done well in the classroom and given her all to everything I’ve seen her be a part of. She’s a pleasure to be around, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to coach her. It’s students like Lauren that make Augustana such a great place to be!”

— Caroline (CJ) Holder, head coach,  
women’s lacross

## MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2020

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

### Why Augustana?

Throughout my entire college search, I was always unsure. Unsure if I wanted a big school or a small school, to go far away or stay close, or to play lacrosse or not. I didn’t complete many visits, but once I went to Augie, all those choices seemed to be answered. During my visit, I stayed with the women’s lacrosse team, and they sold me on Augie with their warm and hilarious personalities. I knew that the campus would be just as genuine as they were, and I was not wrong.

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

Not at all. When I first came to Augustana, I never saw myself as a leader. I was reserved and scared, but now, four years later, I became the captain of the lacrosse team and am the leader I never thought I could be. I have become confident in who I am and my skillset, and I know I would not have said that before my time here at Augustana.

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

There are so many people who have made me who I am and helped me get where I am—my family being the first. My parents have given me the opportunity to receive an education and play the sport I love, and they’ve always supported my decisions.

My roommates have shown me what it means to be confident and humorous, and I’ll forever be thankful that they have brought so much joy into my life. Without my teammates, I would not have learned the importance of camaraderie, and playing for something bigger than yourself.

My coaches Caroline Holder and Randall Haeflinger have shown me that a sport is more than just an extracurricular activity. They taught me punctuality, respect and dedication, and without them, I do not think I would be prepared to graduate.

Lastly, I would not be here without my advisor, Dr. Kunde. She has shown me the importance of communication, and how just one word, gesture or clothing item can have so much meaning.

### Peak experience?

My peak experience would actually be switching majors. Although that was an extremely stressful situation for me at the time, once I switched from being a biology to communications major, my life was totally different. I found joy within every class I took and genuinely enjoyed what I was learning. Being able to take that leap and discover my passion is by far the best experience I’ve had.

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## What surprised you?

What has surprised me the most is the dedication I've felt for the things I'm involved in. Whether it be within my art or communication classes, or on the lacrosse team, I always wanted to be there and put in the extra time. Augie pushes you to want to succeed in every part of your life and makes you a better person because of it.

## How did you use your Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice to study abroad in Siena, Italy, for the 2018 fall term. I am so grateful to have this experience, and the best part of the trip was being able to witness the Palio, which is a bareback horse race that almost exclusively occurs in Siena only twice a year.

## What will you miss the most?

By far I'll miss the people and community of Augustana. Every day when I left for class, I would never fail to see a familiar face. Whether it was someone I had only one class with, for one term, sophomore year or my teammate of three years, there was always someone I knew and could say hi to. The friendships I have made are something I will always hold on to, and if I had the choice, I would never leave them.

## Advice for the Class of 2024?

Never stop doing what makes you happy. Whatever and whoever it is that bring you happiness, always hold it close. Once you realize what truly makes you happy, you will always find your passion and purpose in what you do to be that much stronger.