



## Leah Flanagan

**High school:** Hartford Union High School

**Hometown:** Hartford, Wis.

**Majors:** Neuroscience, pre-medicine

**Minor:** Ethics

**Activities:** Varsity track & field, Augustana Center for the Study of Ethics board member, Pre-SOMA (Student Osteopathic Medical Association), Chi Omega Gamma sorority

**Internships:** Summer Program for Undergraduate Research at the Medical College of Wisconsin

**Post-grad plans:** Attend the Medical College of Wisconsin to pursue my Doctor of Medicine

“Leah is the embodiment of what student-athletes should be and everything that is great about Augustana athletics. Both in the classroom and on the track. She has been a great leader, mentor and role model for the women on the team.”

— Dave Thompson, head coach, women’s track & field and cross country

## MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2020

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

### Why Augustana?

I knew I wanted to attend a smaller school with a faculty dedicated to their students. On my campus visit, I had a great experience talking to professors and truly felt that they cared about the success of their students. I was also recruited by a track & field coach who showed so much excitement for his team and athletes. The atmosphere has always felt inviting at Augie and that hasn’t changed as I close in on the end of my senior year.

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

Yes, but in the best way. I set high goals for myself four years ago, and with the help of the people I have met here and the programs offered by Augustana, I have been able to achieve each one of those goals. The opportunities offered on campus have been a vehicle to help me exceed my expectations for success.

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

My parents have always been there to distract me from stress and offer wise advice. They are my motivation to never give up and the ones who have made the most sacrifices for me to attend a great college.

Dr. Lee pushed me to pursue my ethics minor, which has constituted some of my favorite classes at Augie. He never fails to inquire about the happenings of my life with genuine interest and can always put a smile on my face with his stories.

Dr. Harrington and Dr. Flaherty are two reasons why I was accepted into medical school with their letters of recommendation. I am mostly thankful for the life advice they always manage to work into their curriculum.

My coaches, Chad and Dave, have always had my back and have helped me reach my goals on and off the track. From stellar letters of endorsement to motivational speeches, I am thankful to have them in my life.

I also want to thank my best friends for being shoulders to cry on and advice gurus, and for loving me unconditionally.

### Peak experience?

Studying abroad in Europe. Under the guidance of Dr. Harrington and Dr. Storl, I had the opportunity to take two captivating neuroscience and philosophy courses followed by a two-week period in Berlin, Leipzig and Weimar, Germany. While there, we attended an absolutely riveting neuroscience convention at the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences. I learned so much through this program and left with broadened cultural appreciation and amazement for the world beyond my own.

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## What surprised you?

I am surprised by the refinement of many of my core beliefs. At Augustana, I have been taught to think for myself and assess situations with analytical and critical skills. I have used my new skills to reevaluate how I perceive the world around me, which has allowed me to feel more grounded and confident in my values.

## How did you use Augie Choice?

The neuroscience department's trip to Leipzig, Germany. In addition to the two-week program, I explored England, France and the Netherlands. My month spent in Europe has been one of my most formative experiences, and I'm thankful that Augie Choice got me there.

## What will you miss the most?

I will miss being in such close proximity to my friends. Being a hallway down from, a floor or two up from or a block away from your support system makes you spoiled. It will be a big adjustment to be "on my own" next year. However, I know my relationships are strongly fortified, and my people will always be a phone call away.

## Advice for the Class of 2024?

Trust your intuition and stay positive. You must be bright and accomplished to have been offered acceptance to Augustana. You will be faced with challenges as an undergraduate student, but if you trust yourself and believe in your abilities, you will be able to overcome anything.