



Michael Wardach

High school: Dundee Crown High School

Hometown: Cary, Ill.

Majors: Computer science, mathematics

Minor: Spanish

Activities: Order of the Phoenix, Augustana Concert Band, Phi Beta Kappa academic honor society

Internship: EDGE Center's Web Guild

Post-grad plans: Searching for a job

“I saw great potential in Michael, even as a sophomore, which is why he ended up taking over maintenance of two important software projects — the ACES Uber-like student transport app and the OSL's event-planning app — that had been originally developed by seniors who graduated. Michael rose to the multi-faceted challenge of learning not just one, but FOUR, different technologies (Android, iOS, React Web, and the Firebase BaaS) to maintain and improve these products!”

— Dr. Forrest Stonedahl, associate professor, computer science

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SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

The small size of Augustana attracted me, as it seemed like it would be a place of better student-to-student and student-to-professor interaction. I've found that to be very true during my time here, as the students support each other and faculty work to help students achieve.

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

No, I think I am more involved in campus than I expected to be. I feel more comfortable at Augustana and on campus than I think I ever expected to be.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

Dr. Stonedahl has helped me a lot throughout my time here, providing me with opportunities and guidance to improve my programming skills and become more confident in them.

Dr. Rodman and Dr. Clauss both helped to ignite my interest in mathematics after freshman year and to push forward with a mathematics major.

Overall, my professors in the math and computer science department helped push me to do my best and improve myself.

Peak experience?

The best part of my experience was joining the Order of the Phoenix. Phoenix is a multicultural service fraternity on campus, and after joining them, I felt like I had found my place on campus. Finding a group of people who wanted to make a difference and who had strong bonds between them really shaped my experience. Being a part of this group has pushed me to be the best person I can be, and I've made bonds that will last well beyond the time I spent here.

What surprised you?

There are a lot of resources at this college to help students. There are a lot of offices students can go to to get help for anything they need, but not only that — a lot of the faculty are always willing to help. Whatever you need, there is somewhere or someone on campus who will be able to help.

What will you miss the most?

I'll miss the close community at Augustana. It has always been nice to be able to walk through campus and see students hanging out in the Quad or the Brew and have the opportunity to meet new people.

Advice for the Class of 2025?

Explore everything the college has to offer. Augustana has a pretty wide variety of organizations to find your place in, and once you do, your experience completely changes.