

Marissa Barauskas - biopsychology

Why did you choose your degree program? How has it helped you grow personally and professionally?

I chose this program because I knew it would set me up for success in my future career of occupational therapy, which I will be pursuing in the fall. Throughout this program, I needed to lean on my professors and peers for support. I learned the importance of communication and asking questions. I also gained a strong foundational knowledge that will assist me in graduate school. I was able to experiment with different career paths and I truly enjoyed all that I have learned being a biopsychology major.

What activities are you involved in at McKendree?

During my time at McKendree, I was part of the cheerleading team. I was also involved in the Honors Council and Honors Student Committee. I am vice president of the Psychology Club and president of McKendree's Psi Chi chapter. I also was a student ambassador and peer mentor. I also participated in research with Dr. Boysen, and we submitted two publications to research journals. Finally, I was also a part of the McKendree powerlifting team for a year.

What are you most proud of accomplishing during your time here?

I am most proud of my ability to manage my time. I had the most amazing professors and support throughout my time at McKendree. They helped me navigate how to be involved with all the extracurricular activities that I wanted to pursue. However, I would say the accomplishment I am most proud of is having two journals that I collaborated on become published. That was a super exciting experience.

If you could go back in time, what advice would you give your first-year self?

A piece of advice that I would tell myself is to not be so hard on myself. I would also tell myself to enjoy the moments because time goes by quickly.

Who helped you the most on your journey?

My parents have supported me the most on my journey by staying up late helping me study and always being there to support me. I could not have done it without them.

What's next after graduation?

After graduation, I will be attending Elmhurst University's Master of Occupational Therapy program. Then, I plan to go on to pursue a doctoral degree where I will be able to research and teach.