



**Chloe Overstreet
Eureka College
ACI Peer Mentoring Program**



Chloe Overstreet will begin her junior year this fall at Eureka College, Eureka, Illinois, majoring in history and political science and business administration. A first-generation student from Stillman Valley, Illinois, Overstreet's path to college was rocky. Her father encouraged her, but her mother didn't want her to go away to college, and they could not afford her tuition.

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When Overstreet's father was killed in a work accident during her senior year in high school, college seemed impossible. But with the support of friends and teachers, she persevered. She chose Eureka College after an admissions counselor called to ask how she was doing and how he could help. After attending Eureka's three-day orientation for

first-generation students, she knew Eureka was the right decision. "It showed me there were people who were there to support me," Overstreet says. "It was possible to be a first-generation student with an unconventional support system and still graduate college."

ACI's Peer Mentoring Program helped Overstreet navigate freshman year at Eureka. Now, she serves as a mentor in the program "to let other students know that they are not alone, and there is always someone there who wants them to succeed." And, thanks to the ACI mentor scholarship, Overstreet borrowed less this year and was able to hang on to her savings. "It offered relief from the anxiety of feeling like I will not be able to pay my balance or afford basic necessities," she says. "The ACI Peer Mentoring Program made a huge difference in my college experience."

In May 2020, the ACI Board of Trustees elected Overstreet as the board's first student representative in ACI's 68-year history. Serving as an ACI board member would provide a student perspective, she says, and help other students access opportunities that ACI provides.