



Emily Barylske
McKendree University
ACI General Scholarship



Emily Barylske found success at [McKendree University](#) by focusing on how she could best contribute to the school's volleyball program – not as an athlete, but as a team manager, "doing the background stuff," as she puts it. With volleyball's help, she has found success as a double major in psychology and criminal justice, and hopes to study abroad this coming spring before graduation.

[Watch the video!](#)



A senior from Benld, Illinois, Barylske chose to attend McKendree in nearby Lebanon because it is close to home, she liked the environment and because the volleyball coach offered her a scholarship to manage the team, capitalizing on similar experience she had in middle school and high school. Among other things, her role is to run the clock at

practices, keep score during games, conduct tours and meet potential recruits. "It turned out to be one of the best things that I have ever done. Being able to travel and do all this? I love it," Barylske says.

Psychology became a topic of interest for her because of her own high school experience, she says. "I knew right then and there, I wanted to go into psychology, and I wanted to help people who had been down that road," Barylske says. Along the way, she changed her criminal justice minor to a second major, helped by an internship she served at the Lebanon Police Department through Chief David Roth. "I have gotten to see different things and seen many different points of view," she says. "It's helped increase my education and my own viewpoints of how I see society." Her plans now? To become a high school guidance counselor and help students see the world of career possibilities.

The youngest of three children, Barylske says her family struggled financially in recent years. Her father faced job cuts in the railroad industry and now, a shutdown in the steel industry because of the pandemic. Except for some loan funds from her family, Barylske finances most of her own college education. One of her sources of funds is an ACI General Scholarship, which she has had for three years. "The scholarship really helped out this year. It has helped out every year," Barylske says, adding that without the scholarship, she may not be at McKendree.

"I have a great internship and have a great college experience through it," she says. "I don't even know how to express the words – how much it means to a student knowing their education is funded."

In addition to her work with the volleyball program and studies, Barylske is an alto with the McKendree University Choir, participates in the theater program and is a member of Clio, Kappa Lambda Iota, a social sorority. She has also worked in the University's sports information office, the provost's office and in a factory during the summer, packaging auto parts.

The spring, before graduation, Barylske is planning to study in Ireland at the University of Limerick, provided the pandemic doesn't restrict her. Otherwise, she says she is considering another university in Australia as an alternative.

Editor's note: Barylske did make it to Ireland this spring and is studying at the University of Limerick. Read her [blog post](#) about her experiences.