



Associated Colleges of Illinois

Isabella Anderson

Eureka College

McGraw Foundation Emergency Financial Aid



When she was very young, Isabella Anderson was humming and singing before she understood words. Growing up, singing in choirs and joining musical productions seemed natural. Those experiences, with coaching and plenty of practice have helped this [Eureka College](#) senior from DeKalb, Illinois, to earn a bachelor's degree this May in vocal performance, theater arts and drama, with a minor in Spanish.

When considering colleges, Anderson assumed that a career in the performing arts meant studying at a larger school or conservatory. But an admissions counselor at Eureka College invited her to visit, and she found a school that provided an individualized experience and made it possible for her to perform on stage. "Here I can do all that," she says. "Just having the opportunity during my undergraduate education to take on these larger projects -- that's something I know I would never have been able to accomplish anywhere else." Among her accomplishments: directing a production of "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street," working in the chorus of a professional opera with the Peoria Symphony Orchestra, and this spring, her senior voice recital. Plus, Anderson earned a Durward Sandifer Fellowship from the College, which provided a mentoring and internship experience for her at Footlight Players youth theater company in Indiana, Pennsylvania, helping young campers stage musicals and plays.

[Click to see video!](#)



Like many in the field, Anderson dreams of singing and performing on the world's biggest stages, but knows it takes hard work and "baby steps" to get there. This year, an emergency grant from the McGraw Foundation from ACI is helping her complete her education. "I was lucky to be chosen for that," she says, explaining her parents needed help to finance college educations for her and her brother at the same time. "I was unsure how I was going to be able to

be able to move on with my life had this grant not come at the right time. Without that scholarship, I wouldn't be able to be in school."

Anderson believes attending Eureka College has opened many opportunities and helped her learn from people who know her and pushed her to achieve more. She says there's a plus attending a liberal arts college. "I would have a weaker work ethic had I chosen not to come here. I feel as though I would be less marketable had I gone to a different school. I get to see a bigger snapshot of the world within four years of education."