

A Walk Down Memory Lane

Ingrid Ceden, Savanna Phillips, Angelica Santiago Gonzalez
2017-18 NBA XPLOR Residents in Tucson, AZ



"Purpose is the reason you journey, passion is the fire that lights your way."

Now at the halfway point of their NBA XPLOR Residency, the three Residents of the Tucson-Marana house share reflections of the time spent so far at their host site and their hopes for what the rest of their experience will bring.

Moving to Tucson was never in my wildest dreams, nor was it my first choice. When I first found out about my NBA XPLOR placement I wasn't

happy with it. I doubted, I debated whether it was a good fit for me or not, and I heard countless numbers of people say, "Tucson? It's so hot over there, you'll hate it". But I also prayed, and prayer brought me to my purpose, reminding me of what I had been passionate about all this time, the reason I had committed myself to begin this new journey.

It has been over five months since I've first come to Tucson and I love it here! The mountains, the beautiful views, the people, the ambience, the food, the culture, it's won over my heart! (Of course, I still have to live through the hottest days... But I'm sure I'll still love it).

These past months have tested my faith and stretched my patience, but I was fortunate enough to have been placed with two of the coolest, high spirited, down to earth housemates. We all have been a huge support system to each other through this experience, from the day we met until now. It has felt as if I've known these girls my whole life! My housemates, the people I work with, and the people I've encountered throughout this journey have helped tremendously to light my path! I can say with certainty that I've become more passionate about the things that I do at my job site and host congregation. I have explored and grown as an individual as well as my faith. Though our time here in Tucson is only getting shorter, I am looking forward to what Tucson has in store for us next, because boy, has it been one heck of a ride! - Ingrid

Everything I want to say I have written down in my own blog post. Hopefully, you get a feel for our group bond and strength through our pictures. - Savanna

I cannot possibly top what Ingrid has already said, and I agree with all of it. My housemates have become like family. I feel very lucky to be placed with a group that helps me be a better person and in which we are all very compatible. This has been quite the journey thus far, not always perfect, but we learn to adapt and survive. I see a lot of spiritual growth in myself in ways that I did not anticipate before doing this program. I am not just happy for being in this program, but for being placed in Tucson with my wonderful new friends. I think much of my growth has in large part to do with the culture of this city, as well as the perspectives my housemates/friends provide me when I have a problem. I am only eager to see what the future has in store for all of us. - Angelica

View the Tucson-Marana house's video online at youtu.be/Y3O2vTiZWGs

NBA XPLOR is a 10-month service residency opportunity for young adults ages 21-30, with the purpose of empowering young adults to discern and develop a "heart for care" as they live together in simple community, engage in direct service and justice work, engage in leadership development, and discern their vocational calls to honor the various communities they are called to serve. **Learn more and apply at nbacares.org/xplor.**