



National Benevolent Association

XPLOR
FAITH, JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY

Prepare for the Unexpected

Hannah Ryder, 2016-17 NBA XPLOR Resident in North Hollywood, CA



“I don’t think you quite understand what this program is.”

This is what I was told when I first started making it known that I wanted to be a part of NBA XPLOR.

My reaction: “HA!”

Before I began the application process, I did what any person would do and researched everything about it: blog posts, videos, newsletters. You name it, I found it. There wasn’t much about the program I hadn’t looked at. I had a complete grasp of what the program would be like for me and how, when I got home, things weren’t going to be much different than they were before.

The person who told me I didn’t know what I was getting into was dead wrong.

Well, as I sit here by the creek of Loch Leven, the Disciples camp and conference center in the mountains, I realize just how wrong I was.

No matter how much research you do, nothing can prepare you for the journey that is XPLOR.

I came into this year ready to put my time in at work, go to church on Sundays, and hang with roommates who were essentially strangers. I was going to play by the rules and follow the guidelines.

What I didn’t prepare for, and couldn’t prepare for, was falling in love with a new home and discovering who I am and where I fit into this world as a Christian. I have become very involved with the Pacific Southwest Region and have started making plans for a future I never knew existed for me.



This program has a way of pulling things out of you that you may not have realized were there.

So, for those of you who are in the process of applying, or those who are just thinking about it, know that you can do all the research and still have no idea what to expect. And that is okay. Prepare for the unexpected because that is all you can prepare for.

Put your faith in God and jump in knowing you will come out better on the other side.

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.