

Eureka!

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Eureka! The word has an interesting history and origin. While most of us don't know the details of the word's origin, we all know what it means: "Aha! I've found it!" Recently, I've said this word a lot!



Last year, February 2014, was a time when I was considering whether I could enter this new program called NBA XPLOR. As a financially independent adult, it seemed risky to leave my job as a pharmacy technician and jump into the inaugural year of this program that advocates for "simple living in community." I liked that the program might help me to pursue ministry someday, but how could leaving my job and slashing my income ever help me pay for college and go to seminary? Even after I had applied and been accepted, I still nearly talked myself out of it several times. Still, as risky as it seemed, there was something pulling me to just go with it and see what happens...

This year, February 2015, I was accepted into Disciples-founded Eureka College in Eureka, IL, with the very generous offer of the Disciples Leadership Scholarship. I am quite honestly still wrapping my head around it. Me? You're going to offer that to me? The answer is YES, Eureka! They DID offer it to me!

At 28 years of age, it wasn't easy to say "yes" to XPLOR. I knew I needed an education, and I knew I also needed a period of spiritual discernment. I accepted XPLOR never expecting the education portion to resolve itself, but God had a surprise.

Rev. Bonnie Osei-Frimpong, director of NBA XPLOR, has been a driving force in helping me achieve my goal of education. She knew what I wanted my next step to be and carried that with her. On my campus visit to Eureka College, she called me to tell me about the Disciples Leadership Scholarship. She encouraged me to apply, though I never thought I would get it. She worked with me through the whole process of applying, taking my ACT, and interviewing, and was always available when I needed advice.

While Bonnie helped me tremendously, there have been many others helping nurture my interest in education. Rev. Dr. Suzanne Webb, senior minister at Union Avenue Christian Church, also encouraged me to explore local seminaries. She went to chapel with me on the campus of Eden Theological Seminary and took the time to introduce me to some of the professors. She has been a tremendous advocate for my call to ministry.



I have felt so much encouragement to pursue my calling within NBA XPLOR. I am so grateful and excited for the opportunities that have come from being part of this program. My hope for future applicants—just let God take control and say "yes" to your calling! It all starts with a simple yes. And for me, I say "Aha! I've found it."

The NBA XPLOR Project is a ten-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.

www.nbacaes.org/XPLOR