



“Stay afraid, but do it anyway.”

Cody Bailey, 2016-17 NBA XPLOR Resident in Tucson-Marana, AZ

I never understood how much I was capable of until I pushed myself out of my comfort zone. And let me tell you, I am *well* beyond it. A couple thousand miles away from it. In the desert, of all places.

When I was first introduced to NBA XPLOR by my pastor back home, I thought, “Wow, that’s a really cool opportunity. I’ll never do it, though. I can’t.” And how could I? How could someone like me go to a new and unfamiliar place and do this kind of work? As much as the call to do community work and help people tugged at my heart, I just couldn’t do it. I was afraid of the unknown, and I was afraid to do anything I wasn’t comfortable with.



Well, God clearly had other plans, because here I am, in a completely new place doing things I never imagined I would be doing. Today, I look at myself and see that I am so much more than the anxiety that constantly weighs down on me and that *I can do incredible things*.

To any future residents who are struggling with something similar, or just whether or not they think they could do this program, I want to share this quote. Something I have learned from Carrie Fisher:

“Stay afraid, but do it anyway. What’s important is the action. You don’t have to wait to be confident. Just do it, and eventually the confidence will follow.”

I didn’t wait to be confident; I pushed myself in the direction to *become* confident. God made this easier by surrounding me with people who believe in me and help push me when I don’t feel strong enough to do it myself. And for that, I am eternally grateful.



I still have anxiety. It hasn’t just magically disappeared. I still battle it every single day of my life. But it’s different now. I’m not letting it dictate what I can and can’t do. I wasn’t confident coming into this program, and I may not be as confident as I want to be yet, but there is progress. It might not be noticeable to some, but to me? It’s phenomenal. Being in this program has challenged and changed me. I’m slowly becoming the person I know God has always meant for me to be. One of my goals I hoped to achieve through this program was to grow as a person. And I already have.

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.