



National Benevolent Association

XPLOR

FAITH, JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY

I'm Living Out in L.A....

Eliud Peralez, 2016-17 NBA XPLOR Resident in North Hollywood, CA



Five months ago, if you would have asked me where I would be, I would have given you a completely different answer than living in Los Angeles, California. I was in the process of completing my bachelor's degree in history at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, and I was determined to finish in the next year. Then, boom!! I get a life-changing call from a long-time Hispanic pastor and friend of mine, Gabriel Lopez. Thus, NBA XPLOR became an option for the next 10 months of my life.

“I know the plans I have for you,” says God! I've completely put my trust in Him, took an enormous leap of faith, and said “yes” to the call of XPLOR intern in Southern California. Although I was excited to be moving, there was a huge issue that was tugging at my heart as the approaching date of departure was arriving. Did I really answer God's call, or am I just really excited to be moving out to the mecca of the entertainment industry?

I spoke to God every day about how I needed signs and affirmation for this decision, as if I were going to receive a phone call or an email from Him saying, “Yes, everything is clear for takeoff.” Then, God did exactly that. God has a funny way of putting things together. My parents spoke to me and told me how excited they were for this opportunity. My brother told me that he would have participated in the XPLOR program if he had the chance, but there was one affirmation that set everything moving.

Pastor Gabriel Lopez, co-pastor at East Whittier Christian Church, talked with me about how XPLOR gives me the tools and resources to work on spiritual vocation and to really just explore myself. After a long talk over the phone, I realized this is where God was calling me to move. My decision was not about moving to L.A., but moving closer to the call that God has placed in my life.

I've been in Los Angeles for five months, and I am as happy as can be about my life-changing decision. I've come to realize that I'm just a part of God's bigger plan for this program. Alongside my journey in NBA XPLOR are my roommates, who have equally put their trust in God. The best part of God knowing the plans he has for us is that they're plans to benefit you and not harm you, plans to give you hope in a future.

I don't know what lies ahead, but for now I'm XPLORing the plans God has for me.



*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.***