

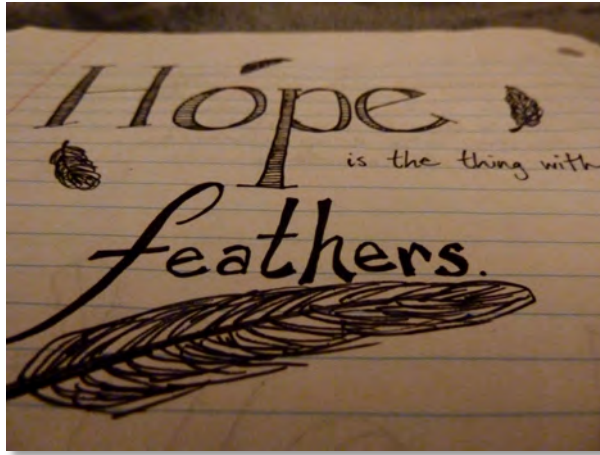


National Benevolent Association

**XPLOR**  
FAITH, JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY

**“Hope is the thing with feathers.”**

Sarah Bates-Scott, 2015-16 NBA XPLOR Resident in Tucson-Marana, AZ



*“Hope is the thing with feathers.”*

*~Emily Dickinson*

Too often, I wake up and hear on the news about a shooting, about a bigoted politician, about police brutality, about refugees dying as they flee violence, and part of me just wonders:

Is this world too broken to be fixed?

It’s especially hard to take news of people hurting others when they hide behind their interpretation of religion. We as Disciples talk

about being a “movement for wholeness in a fragmented world,” and we do many things toward that goal. One of the reasons I joined NBA XPLOR is that I want to help, in any way I can. I want the world to become a better place, and I think many people do.

But is it enough?

Sometimes it feels like the world is too racist, too sexist, too homophobic and xenophobic and ableist, and just plain violent. Sometimes it feels like anything I do will just be like an ant trying to stop a tidal wave. Sometimes I wake up too worn-down, too weary, too hopeless about the state of the world.

But there’s something inside of me, even when I’m just so tired—a small, wordless feeling...of hope, of idealism, of determination. And I’m willing to bet I’m not the only one.

So...

When you wake up tired, when the world seems to be beating you down—you can’t give up; you can’t give in. The world is fragmented, the system is broken, and that is precisely why we need to fix it, to do our very best.

And if each of us does that, others will notice. They might think to themselves that maybe the world can change, and that they can help. They might, themselves, begin to hope.

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*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.*