

Yearning to Feel Protected

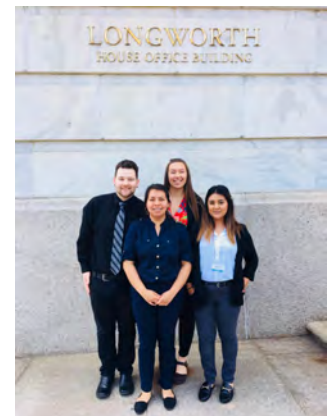
Ingrid Cedeño, 2017-18 NBA XPLOR Resident in Tucson-Marana, AZ



In NBA's strategic planning for 2018-2021, we have named Advocacy and Activism as a strategic priority, as we work to transform the root causes of social injustice. Efforts include equipping and training partners to address the critical social justice issues most relevant to their work. From April 20 to 23, NBA XPLOR Residents from Tucson-Marana and Hiram-Mantua traveled to Washington, D.C. for Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD), an event that aims to strengthen the voice of the ecumenical Christian community and to mobilize for social

justice through worship, theological reflection, and opportunities for learning and witness. In this reflection, Ingrid shares what it was like to advocate for policy changes that will address the impacts that conflict, climate change, and corruption have on displaced communities.

EAD was one of the many great experiences that NBA and XPLOR has allowed me to experience. I would have never thought I would be inside of Capitol Hill speaking to my state representatives about a topic that hits close to home - migration and displacement. I truly believe that it is our calling to respond and be outspoken about those that are being displaced due to climate change, and migrating due to threats in their own home country. People forget to realize, migrants and refugees are just people, with dreams, with fear, only trying to keep their families safe. They are not "aliens," they are not creatures to be treated like less than a person. I was inspired to write a little something from all the stories I was able to hear from this conference.



Boom, Boom
Threats, after threats
Run away
Why do I feel so afraid?
We call this our home
But why don't I feel safe?
Run away, Run away
We pack our dreams, only to fly away
Disaster here, disaster there.
They're only making us want to
Run away
We are feeling shaken, uncomfortable
We find ourselves vulnerable
We grow wings out of every dismay
Only to find ourselves displaced
Run away, run away
Our dreams are not welcomed here
Why do I feel like we don't belong?
We just long to feel accepted,
For we did not ask to be rejected
Run away
We are only yearning to feel protected.

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.**