



ELVIS DIAZ

Berry College '15

Innovative Integrator of Bonner and Business



Creating Connections Between Bonner and Finance through the Non-Profit and Private Sectors

Elvis Diaz has always been interested in both finance and community service, but he never really knew how to fit the two together. As a current Master's of Business Administration candidate at Arizona State University, he is now taking steps to actively join his two passions by pursuing business through social change.

Challenges as a Bonner Scholar

When Elvis Diaz first started at Berry College he knew that he wanted to major in finance. As he did so, he found it exceptionally difficult to integrate his service work with his academic experience.

His difficulty in making a connection soon made Elvis a cynical business student who thought that the only thing that businesses wanted to do was to take advantage of people. This would not be his perspective for long.

Bonner After Berry

After graduating from Berry, Elvis was a Bonner Foundation summer intern. As the summer ended, he landed a position as the NJ Bonner AmeriCorps Program Associate at the Foundation. In this role, Elvis was able to work with a handful of different non-profits and gain a better understanding of the funding structures that allow a non-profit organization to function effectively.

"Every non-profit organization needs someone who focuses on finance. Majoring in finance allowed me to better understand how corporations use resources. Knowing this allows for one to make better decisions which can benefit the community."

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**Turn fear into
excitement**

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Lessons from Graduate School

Up until this point, Elvis' life and work was anchored around the Bonner Program. After two years, he decided to take a leap of faith to move out to Arizona and pursue his [Master's of Business Administration \(MBA\) at Arizona State University](#). By doing this he was able to practice one of his life philosophies: "turn fear into excitement." This move has been beneficial for his career in many ways.

Elvis no longer limits his work to just the non-profit sector. He realizes that there are ways to work for the private sector while maintaining a Bonner lens and a passion for service. Elvis is accomplishing this by specializing in Sustainable Enterprise in his MBA. This specialization allows Elvis to focus on social responsibility and environmental sustainability within the business sector, which helps him merge his interests in community engagement and business.

After graduating from business school, Elvis hopes to begin a career in finance in hopes of eventually migrating towards corporate social responsibility for a business or go back to the non-profit sector as a consultant to bridge business and non-profits. Elvis is particularly interested in being a consultant because he believes that businesses can drive positive impacts faster than policy and can potentially help bring what the non-profits are doing to a greater level. If there is one takeaway from business school, it would be that businesses are not evil. In fact, the vast business industry is a sector where Elvis has had the opportunity to finally bridge his finance and service passions.

*Written by Aleah Qureshi
Bonner Alumna at Wofford College '18*



To learn more about Elvis, you can reach out to him on LinkedIn:

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