

Pursuing an MBA has become a crucial step in my career journey as I strive to progress into leadership roles. While I have enjoyed success in my career so far, I recognize that further education is essential to reaching the next level of leadership. My professional path began with a focus on financial stability, but it has evolved into a deeper passion for growth, problem-solving, and mentoring others. I now find fulfillment in not just achieving personal success but also in passing down my knowledge and experiences to juniors and interns. I understand that to continue advancing, I need to acquire more strategic insights, sharpen my leadership skills, and expand my business acumen. An MBA will equip me with the tools I need to succeed in this next phase of my career.

The MBALaunch program offers an amazing opportunity to prepare for this transition. As a first-generation student and first-generation professional, I have navigated many of the challenges of this journey without a clear roadmap or the benefit of traditional guidance. I've learned firsthand how strenuous and isolating it can be without mentorship. I am aware that there is much I don't know—knowledge gaps that can only be addressed by connecting with experienced professionals, gaining insights from peers, and learning from experts who have already walked this path. The MBALaunch program will provide invaluable resources, guidance, and mentorship to help me prepare for business school applications, ensuring that I am ready to take my best shot. The comprehensive support structure of MBALaunch will provide the clarity and confidence I need to navigate this complex process and set myself up for long-term success.

Additionally, I strongly connect with Forté's mission of "More Women Leading." As women, we are often faced with unique challenges in the workplace. Too often, our capabilities are questioned, not because of our qualifications, but because we are not part of the "boys' club" or because we are mothers and the primary caregivers. Women tend to be more agreeable and less domineering, traits that are sometimes mistaken for a lack of assertiveness or leadership potential. However, I believe these qualities should be viewed as strengths, and it's crucial that women receive the mentorship and role models they need to navigate these challenges. Forté's dedication to empowering women through resources, networking, and mentorship is something that deeply resonates with me. It offers a space where women can feel supported and encouraged to persist in their careers despite the obstacles they face.

I am committed to pushing through these challenges and pursuing leadership, and I am excited by the prospect of being part of a community that shares this vision. The MBALaunch program and Forté's mission align perfectly with my goals and will provide me with the necessary tools and encouragement to thrive. With the support of both, I am confident that I can not only reach but exceed the leadership goals I've set for myself.

Thanks for your consideration, Ivana Jones.