For EMBA student, program is all about the journey

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Eduardo Montero (MBA ’27), head of procurement for APM Terminals in New York, travels to New Orleans twice a month to attend the Freeman School's Executive MBA program.

For Eduardo Montero (MBA ’27), enrolling in the Executive MBA program at Tulane’s Freeman School of Business was a decision that required more than just weighing time and financial commitments. It took a leap of faith.

“You just have to do it,” Montero says. “It's not whether it's the right moment. There's not always going to be the right moment.”

Originally from Costa Rica, Montero moved to Mobile, Alabama, in 2022 to oversee procurement at the Port of Mobile and the Port of Miami for APM Terminals, a unit of the Danish shipping company Maersk that manages container terminals and provides integrated cargo and inland services at ports around the globe.

In January 2026, Montero took that leap of faith to enroll in the Freeman School’s EMBA program, committing to travel the 150 miles between Mobile and New Orleans to attend classes twice a month. Three months later, in April 2026, that plan changed course when APMT promoted him to head of procurement for the Port of Elizabeth at their New Jersey location.

Thankfully, his enrollment at a school more than 1,000 miles from his new role wasn’t a dealbreaker. APMT fully supported his continued education with scheduling flexibility and financial assistance.

“I think it's one of the best decisions I have made,” Montero says. “My company supports the EMBA journey and scheduling is a shared effort. My work schedule and MBA classes are coordinated so that I can meet my commitments to both.”

Despite running the procurement department for one of the largest ports in the United States, he currently flies to Louisiana twice a month for full-day classes on Fridays and Saturdays. Rather than viewing his busy schedule as a burden, Montero embraces it and encourages other students to adopt a similar perspective.

“Don't think about coming here as another responsibility in your life. Come here as if you are on vacation,” he advises. “You're choosing this program because you want to learn more. Take it as your escape. Take it as a great adventure to get those days off, to disconnect from the world, and just be here. This is for you.”

Ashley Francis, assistant dean for the Stewart Center for Professional and Executive Education, says the program is designed intentionally to support executives who are

balancing work and graduate study.

“We are catering to working professionals, so we're providing a high level of support,” she explains. “The faculty creates engaging learning experiences and that means giving the students an opportunity to share stories of what's happening in the workplace. We find that our students learn best not just from the faculty but from each other.”

The EMBA, Professional MBA and Online MBA programs share similar curricula but differ in format. The EMBA is designed for students who want to complete an intensive, cohort-based program in 17 months, while the PMBA allows students to spread coursework over a longer period through evening classes. The online program offers even greater flexibility for students who might have difficulty attending classes on campus.

“Really, it just comes down to what structure works best for you,” Francis says.

The three programs have similar class dynamics, but EMBA students also earn a concentration in global strategy and participate in an international experience that brings students from around the world — including locations like Paris, Lithuania and Peru — into the classroom. During their final year, students work with an international partner on a consulting project and travel abroad to present recommendations to the client.

For students like Montero who live more than 60 miles from campus, the program offers a travel stipend. Beginning in January 2027, additional virtual classes will reduce the number of required on-campus classes to one weekend per month, making it even more convenient for out-of-state residents.

“If you're coming from out of state, enjoy the journey. Enjoy New Orleans,” Montero says. “And at the same time, take the program as it is—a journey to learn.”

Despite the demands on his time, Montero is embracing this season of intensive learning.

“I know I will miss having a lot of this in my life once I graduate, especially my amazing cohort, but I see it as a long-term investment,” he says. “What I am learning is already strengthening my work at APMT, and I expect that value to keep growing for years to come.’’

Montero has advice for out-of-state executives considering an EMBA and grappling with how to integrate school into their work-life balance.

“Prepare for the journey and communicate it, at work and at home. That’s the key,” he says. “Traveling to New Orleans from New York, it takes real effort and preparation. I organize everything so I keep a healthy balance: professionally, personally and financially. I enjoy the commitment I made to myself, and I’m excited each time I come. If I can do it, anybody can.”