A Guide to Taking a Gap Year

**Gap Year**
Taking some time to gain experience from an internship or a job during the “Gap” year can offer insights into a new career field and the type of graduate program you really want to pursue. See below a few ways to approach the “Gap” year.

**Real World 101**
Some students want to work in a field aligned with their career goals right after they graduate and plan to attend graduate school only after a few years of work experience. If you have this time frame in mind, begin your job search immediately. Review Handshake for vacancies, attend Career Fairs and workshops. Concrete work experience often help students to choose graduate program wisely and graduate programs may prefer applicants who have relevant work experience in the field.

**Career Exploration**
If you are interested in two or more careers that require different types of graduate training, taking a year or more to explore the fields is a wise decision. After an internship or six months of temporary work, you have a better sense of whether the field is a match for you.

**Acting Globally**
Many students express interest in combining their career interest with an international focus, or simply getting experience living in another country and culture. Review the international opportunities listed below.

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National Opportunities

**Americorps**

Description: AmeriCorps is a domestic service organization that places corps members in community service positions all around the country. Corps members focus on a specific issue such as education, public safety, health or the environment, and they work on bettering this issue within the community they are serving. Corps members serve in this position for ten months to one year.

**Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship**
https://www.hungercenter.org/fellowships/emerson/

The Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship is an eleven month program that is divided into two phases. The first phase focuses on service, and places fellows in community organizations across the country that are battling hunger. For the second phase of the fellowship, fellows move to Washington DC, where they work on policy with national organizations to combat hunger and poverty-related issues. There are 20 fellows total; both the field placement and policy work are related to hunger issues.

**Camp Hill**
http://www.camphill.org/

In Camphill, people usually live together in house communities. Community members include people with developmental and other disabilities, long-term coworkers who share responsibility for the leadership, managing and running of the community, short term coworkers who volunteer for shorter periods of usually one or two years. Coworkers are responsible for the health and care needs of the people they live with. Coworkers help provide support with daily living to anyone in your house that needs assistance.

**Citizen Schools**
http://www.citizenschools.org/

The National Teaching Fellowship is a unique, two-year professional and leadership development program. The Fellowship is a paid service program that offers a diverse range of experiences to people of varied backgrounds who have high potential as educators and leaders in the non-profit sector. Teaching Fellows (TFs) are essential to
the success of the Citizen Schools’ program. These engaging, dedicated, and caring adults work closely with urban middle–school students and their families to help transform lives. Each TF leads a group of approximately 18–23 students, supporting their academic achievement through structured academic support and by facilitating hands–on, learning activities led by community volunteers. The Citizen Schools’ program offers TFs the opportunity to engage students in a diverse range of educational experiences and provides leadership development support— with the ultimate goal of preparing students for high school success, and enhanced college and career access.

City Hall Fellows
http://www.cityhallfellows.org/

This 12 month fellowship introduces college graduates to positions that allow them the opportunity to understand how cities work and the various issues that impact local government.

City Year
http://www.cityyear.org/

City Year is a service program that places members primarily in educational and youth programs in cities across the US for one year. The program places a large emphasis on working with youth in at–risk communities. Besides primarily working with youth, members also might participate in community service projects (such as rebuild) within the areas they are serving.

Code for America
http://codeforamerica.org/

Code for America is a non–profit, and a new kind of organization. Our team is made up of web geeks, city experts, and technology industry leaders. We are building a network of civic leaders and organizations who believe there is a better way of doing things and want to make a difference.

Green Corps Environment Fellowship
http://www.greencorps.org/

Green Corps Field School for Environmental Organizing is a yearlong program that trains members in leading environmental–based political campaigns. Trainees start working on campaigns from the start of their education. Trainees gain classroom and field experience in environmental and public health campaigns, and career placements in environmental groups.
Herbert Scoville Jr. Peace Fellowship  
http://www.scoville.org/

The Herbert Scoville Jr. Peace Fellowship is a competitive national fellowship program that provides college graduates with the opportunity to gain a Washington perspective on key issues of peace and security over a 6–9 month period. The Fellows serve as full-time junior staff members at the participating organization of their choice. Up to 8 Scoville Fellowships are awarded annually. Fellows receive active mentoring and networking from distinguished Board of Directors and former Fellows in addition to their stipend and benefits.

Inspired Teaching Certificate Program  
http://www.inspiredteaching.org/programs/inspired-teacher-certification-program

The Inspired Teacher Certification Program is a state-accredited, 24-month teacher preparation program that prepares, supports, and certifies highly qualified individuals to become teachers in the District of Columbia. Inspired Teaching Fellows begin their teacher career with a residency year, working under the guidance of a lead teacher, gaining knowledge and experience to enable a smooth transition into their teaching career. In the second year, Fellows, as teachers of record, continue with coursework and mentoring. The Inspired Teacher Certification Program prepares educators in two areas: Early Childhood and Elementary Education.

KIPP DC  
http://www.kippdc.org/careers/capital-teaching-residency/

KIPP DC and E.L. Haynes public charter schools have joined forces to create the Capital Teaching Residency (CTR) program. CTR is an intensive year-long teacher training program based in the highest performing charter schools in Washington, DC. This highly selective program focuses on the areas of: Math and Science, Special Education, Early Childhood

Math for America  
http://www.mathforamerica.org/fellowships

Math for America is a nonprofit organization that has the mission to improve math education in secondary public schools in the United States. Math for America does this by recruiting, training, and retaining outstanding mathematics teachers. There are Math for America placements in Los Angeles, San Diego, Washington DC, and New York City.
NYC Urban Fellows Program

The Urban Fellows Program is a highly selective, nine-month fellowship which combines work in Mayoral offices and City agencies with an intensive seminar series that explores current urban issues impacting public policy. Program participants are diverse and come from all over the country to work in New York City.

Paraclete Academy
http://www.paraclete.org/academy/

The Paraclete Academy in Boston, MA seeks mission-driven teachers who want to work for social justice through education. Paraclete students come from low-income families (about 60% live below the poverty line) and are fiercely dedicated to their studies. Paraclete teachers are dedicated to making a difference to the children of the South Boston community while looking for an opportunity to acquire expertise in the fields of education and community service. The Paraclete Academy works in the after-school setting and has three overarching goals: to support students' academic development, to enrich their educations through explorations and to help families navigate the Boston school landscape.

RARE
http://csc.uoregon.edu/rare/

Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) is an AmeriCorps program administered through the University of Oregon's Community Service Center (CSC). RARE AmeriCorps is currently supported through grants from the Corporation for National & Community Service (AmeriCorps), The Ford Family Foundation, the University of Oregon, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Oregon Food Bank. In addition, each participating community provides $20,000 of approximately $27,000 needed to place, train, and support a full-time RARE AmeriCorps member.

Schuler Scholar Program Scholar Coaches
http://www.schulerprogram.org/en/americorps/service-opportunities.html

The Schuler Scholar Program (SSP) is a non-profit private foundation based in the northern suburbs of Illinois. Every year the Schuler Scholar Program recruits recent college graduates to serve as AmeriCorps members in each Schuler partnership high school. The members, called Scholar Coaches, provide one-on-one support to the
Schuler Scholars and deliver a wide range of programs throughout the year. Additionally, Scholar Coaches develop programming, plan and execute exposures, assume leadership roles within the organization, and receive on-going professional development. Coaches serve as tutors, mentors and role models for the students and Schuler staff members provide the same support for the Coaches.

**Student Conservation Association**
http://www.thesca.org/serve

SCA offers internships in over 50 disciplines throughout the US. Conservation. The SCA has postings of internships all over the country – applicants must complete a search on the website to narrow down internship options. Internships are 3–12 month expense-paid opportunities to preserve environmental and cultural resources.

**Teach for America**
http://www.teachforamerica.org

Teach for America places recent college graduates in teaching positions in public schools across the country. Corps members teach grades K–12, in all subjects. The mission of TFA is to reduce the educational gap among American students.

**Think Impact**
http://thinkimpact.org/

ThinkImpact is an international non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C. that catalyzes social businesses in Kenya and South Africa. Founded in 2003, Think Impact has grown to become a leading player in the social enterprise sector. We provide young social entrepreneurs the most effective vehicle to build high-impact social businesses that empower community members in rural Africa.

**University Child Development School**
http://www.ucds.org/

University Child Development School in Seattle, WA offers a one-year Resident Teacher Program that is ideal for recent graduates who value education and children and thrive when learning by doing. Resident Teachers team with mentor teachers in elementary classrooms. The Resident Program is a teaching experience with thoughtful mentorship and professional development opportunities.
White House Fellows
http://www.whitehouse.gov/fellows/

The White House Fellows program is a prestigious program for leadership and public service. White House Fellows typically spend a year working as full-time, paid special assistants to senior White House Staff, the Vice President, Cabinet Secretaries and other top-ranking government officials. Fellows also participate in an education program consisting of roundtable discussions with renowned leaders from the private and public sectors, and trips to study U.S. policy in action both domestically and internationally.

Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship
http://woodrow.org/

The Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship seeks to recruit, prepare and retain effective teachers for the students and schools who need them most. It is open to individuals—college seniors, recent graduates, and career changers—with undergraduate degrees particularly in the sciences. Fellows will attend enriched, school-based master’s level teacher education programs, complemented by intensive mentoring during the first three years of teaching at high-need urban and rural schools.
International Opportunities

American India Foundation
http://aif.org/

The AIF Clinton Fellowship for Service provides a select group of young American professionals the opportunity to serve marginalized and underprivileged communities in India by working with NGOs for a period of 10 months.

Boren Fellowships
https://borenawards.org/boren_fellowship

Boren Fellowships provide up to $30,000 to U.S. graduate students to add an important international and language component to their graduate education through specialization in area study, language study, or increased language proficiency. Boren Fellowships support study and research in areas of the world that are critical to U.S. interests, including Africa, Asia, Central & Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle East, with a focus on studying less commonly taught languages. Boren Fellowship awards are made for a minimum of 12 weeks and maximum of 24 months. The deadline to apply is January 27, 2015.

Borlaug Fellows in Global Food Security Graduate Research Grant
http://www.purdue.edu/discoverypark/food/borlaugfellows/research-fellowship/index.php

The U.S. Borlaug Fellows in Global Food Security graduate research grant program supports exceptional graduate students who are interested in developing a component of their graduate research in a developing country setting and in collaboration with a mentor from an International Agricultural Research Center (IARC), or a qualifying* National Agricultural Research System (NARS) unit.

CARE International
http://www.care-international.org

CARE is a major international humanitarian agency delivering broad-spectrum emergency relief and long-term international development projects. Founded in 1945, CARE is nonsectarian, impartial, and non-governmental.
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Junior Fellowship
http://carnegieendowment.org/about/jr-fellows

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is an organization that works toward advancing cooperation between nations, and promotes active international engagement by the U.S. This is a yearlong fellowship that offers eight to ten research assistantships with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Research fellows are paired with the Endowment’s senior associates. Grinnell graduate Margaret Lay’07 was a fellow.

Christianson Grant
https://www.interexchange.org/foundation/christianson-grant/

The Christianson Grant is awarded to individuals who have arranged their own work abroad programs. Proposed programs must be at least six months in length and emphasize a work component. The grant program does not support independent research projects or academic study abroad programs.

Congress–Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals in Germany

The Congress–Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals (CBYX) is a fellowship funded by the German Bundestag and U.S. Congress, that annually provides 75 American and 75 German young professionals the opportunity to spend one year in each others' countries, studying, interning, and living with hosts on a cultural immersion program.

Council on International Exchange – Teach Abroad
http://www.ciee.org/teach/

CIEE offers paid teaching positions in seven countries (Chile, China, Dominican Republic, South Korea, Spain, Thailand and Vietnam) for university graduates looking to teach English abroad and immerse themselves in a foreign community.

Cross Culture Solutions
Cross-Cultural Solutions, also known as CCS, is a nonprofit working to address critical global issues by providing meaningful volunteer service to communities abroad, and contributing responsibly to local economies.

**Cultural Ambassadors**

The North American Language and Culture Assistants Program is an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of Spain. The program is primarily devoted to providing grants for US and Canadian university students –majoring in any subject– and graduates with some proficiency in Spanish. Its main objective is to provide North American native English or French students with the opportunity to assist a teacher in the English or French programs in elementary, secondary or language schools in Spain (12 to 16 hours a week).

**English Open Doors**
[http://teachingchile.com/about_chile_program.htm](http://teachingchile.com/about_chile_program.htm)

English Open Doors full-time volunteers make a lasting impact on the lives of their students, motivating them to improve their English and participate in cross-cultural exchange. English Open Doors Volunteers teach alongside a Chilean co–teacher in either public or semi–private schools. Volunteers are placed throughout Chile, and work with students ranging from 5th to 12th grade.

**English Program in Korea**
[http://www.epik.kr/](http://www.epik.kr/)

The English Program in Korea (EPIK), affiliated to the Korean Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, was established in 1995 to improve the English speaking abilities of students and teachers in Korea, to develop cultural exchanges and reform English teaching methodologies in Korea.

**French Embassy Teaching Assistantship**

The Teaching Assistant Program in France offers you the opportunity to work in France for 7 months, teaching English to French students of all ages. Each year, over 1,100 American citizens and permanent residents teach in public schools across all regions of metropolitan France and in the overseas departments of French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique and Réunion.
German Academic Exchange Program
https://www.daad.org

GAIN was created by DAAD in cooperation with the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) to provide support for German scholars and scientists working in North America by facilitating networking within the community and improving the flow of information on current developments in higher education and new career opportunities at German universities, research institutions, and companies.

Global Health Corps
http://ghcorps.org/fellows/program/

Global Health Corps recruits placement organizations that are doing excellent work in improving healthcare access and health outcomes for the poor. Placement organizations range from small grassroots organizations to large global institutions. Placement organizations identify an area of need, create a job description for a fellowship position, demonstrate the capacity to absorb two new fulltime staff, and identify a clear manager for the fellow team. Fellow candidates apply for specific positions with one of our placement organizations for which they have relevant skills and experience, and are selected jointly by GHC and the placement organization.

Interac
http://www.interacnetwork.com/

Interac is Japan’s leading private provider of Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs). Our highly motivated and qualified teachers serve thousands of schools and boards of education throughout every region of Japan, working with children from kindergarten to high school.

International Schools Services
https://www.iss.edu

For over 50 years ISS has brought the very best educators together with the very best schools, pairing over 20,000 candidates and 300 schools in more than 150 countries worldwide. Now more than ever, ISS makes securing a highly sought international teaching career easier, smarter and more affordable.
Japan Exchange and Teaching
http://www.jetprogramme.org/

The Japan Exchange and Teaching Program is sponsored by the Japanese government. JET places native English speakers in classrooms across Japan. The workers live in Japan for up to a year and serve as a language assistant to Japanese students.

LUCE
http://www.hluce.org/lsprogram.aspx

The program is unique among American–Asian exchanges in that it is intended for young leaders who have had limited experience of Asia and who might not otherwise have an opportunity in the normal course of their careers to come to know Asia. Those who already have significant experience in Asia or Asian studies are not eligible for the Luce Scholars Program.

Mickey Leland International Hunger Fellows Program
http://www.hungercenter.org/fellowships/leland/

During each two-year fellowship cycle, 12–15 Leland Fellows are placed with international development organizations that include international and local NGOs, U.S. government agencies and multilateral organizations. Fellows work on a variety of food security issues, such as agricultural development, nutrition, natural resource management, agribusiness development and women’s empowerment. Includes a monthly stipend, health insurance and travel expenses. The deadline to apply will be in January 2015.

Nanubhai Teaching Fellowship
http://nanubhai.org

We bring native English speakers to boarding schools in rural India. Fellows provide additional practice in speaking English to help students build both skill and confidence, which makes them more competitive with their urban peers in the Indian job market.

Payne International Development Fellowship Program
http://www.paynefellows.org/?areaid=2&contentid=941

The USAID Donald M. Payne International Development Graduate Fellowship Program seeks to attract outstanding young people who are interested in pursuing careers in the Foreign Service of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The Payne Fellowship, which provides up to $90,000 in benefits over two years for graduate
school, internships, and professional development activities, provides a unique pathway to the USAID Foreign Service.

**Peace Corps**


Peace Corps is a program sponsored by the US government that sends corps members to countries around the world. Corps members assist in infrastructure and community development within the country they serve in. Examples of assignments include teaching, construction, community organizing, and medical aid.

**Projects Abroad**

[http://www.projects-abroad.org](http://www.projects-abroad.org)

Projects Abroad is one of the largest volunteer abroad organizations in the world. Founded in 1992, we send 10,000 people abroad each year on a variety of service projects and internships overseas. All participants receive unparalleled in-country support from our full-time, professional staff to ensure that the experience is safe, worthwhile and fun.

**Princeton in Africa**

[http://www.princetoninafrica.org/about/about-piaf/](http://www.princetoninafrica.org/about/about-piaf/)

Princeton in Africa matches talented and passionate college graduates with our partners working across Africa for yearlong service projects. Our program is open to graduating seniors and young alumni from any accredited college or university in the U.S. Our Fellows have helped improve education and public health, source fresh water and alternative energy, increase family incomes, and so much more.

**Princeton in Asia**

[http://piaweb.princeton.edu/application-process](http://piaweb.princeton.edu/application-process)

Princeton in Asia (PiA) offers service-oriented fellowships in the fields of education, media/journalism, international development (NGOs) and business, with a majority of fellows working as English teachers at universities and high schools. PiA fellowships are open to graduates or graduating seniors from all accredited colleges and universities.
Princeton in Latin America
http://www.princeton.edu/~pila/

PiLA offers service experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean to match outstanding recent college graduates who are interested in year–long service fellowship opportunities with partner NGO and multilateral organizations that are engaged in socially responsible development projects throughout the region.

Public Allies
http://publicallies.org/

An AmeriCorps program that places allies in community development NGOs serving for four days a week for 10 months at local nonprofits, where they create, improve and expand services that address issues including youth development, education, public health, economic development, and the environment. Once a week, allies participate in a rigorous leadership development program in which local community leaders and expert practitioners lead workshops.

Samaritan Inns
http://www.samaritaninns.org/

This program offers a year–long innkeeper fellowship at a homeless shelter/halfway house in Washington D.C. Interns take classes at the Servant Leadership School, participate in monthly community–building activities and group reflection, and have opportunities to connect with individuals and organizations working to address the complex problems of poverty. InnKeepers also learn about addictive behaviors, explore their faith, and personalize their understanding of poverty and oppression.

Samuel Huntington Public Service Award
http://www.nationalgridus.com/huntington.asp

The Samuel Huntington Public Service Award, sponsored by National Grid, provides $10,000 stipend to a graduating college senior to pursue public service anywhere in the world. The Award allows recipients to engage in a meaningful public service activity for one year before proceeding on to graduate school or a career.
Teach and Learn in Korea (TaLK)
http://www.talk.go.kr/talk/talk_new/intro.jsp

TaLK is a Korean Government scholarship program known as Teach and Learn in Korea. The program’s main objective is to invite and train native English teachers and overseas Koreans to teach practical English in after-school classes at the rural elementary school.

Teach and Learn with Georgia
http://tlg.gov.ge/

Volunteer teachers will stay in Georgia for at least one year and experience once in a lifetime opportunities, such as getting familiarized with amazing Georgian customs and traditions by living with local families, experiencing unique Georgian folklore and cuisine by socializing with local communities, and learning the Georgian language, one of the 14 existing alphabets in the world, should they wish to do so.

Teach for China

Teach For China (formerly known as the China Education Initiative or CEI) recruits, selects, trains, and supports outstanding US and Chinese graduates to work side-by-side to deliver an excellent education in high poverty, rural Chinese communities. In the short-term, Teach For China’s Fellows are placed in full-time, two-year teaching commitments at under-resourced schools, where they meet the pressing need for exceptional educators. In the long-term, Teach For China supports its alumni – equipped with the experience, conviction, and insight that comes from leading children to fulfill their potential – to be a force for change, working from across sectors to expand educational opportunity.

Teach for Thailand
http://www.americanthaifoundation.org/teach-thailand-corps

TTC places American graduates in underserved Thai schools as English language teachers. TTC believes that language skills are an essential foundation for a better life and a better world. Thai students equipped with English proficiency are positioned to succeed in school, work, and life, and to make an impact in their communities. Teach Thailand Corps has learned from and adapted elements of the Peace Corps philosophy of service and learning.
The American University in Cairo Presidential Internship Program
http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/leadership/president/internship-program

Established in 1981, the Presidential Internship Program at The American University in Cairo (AUC) provides recent university graduates with the opportunity to work at the highest levels of an international university, experience life in Cairo and learn Arabic.

US Fulbright Fellowship
http://fulbright.state.gov/

The Fulbright program is a seven–month to year–long fellowship that places recent undergraduate and graduate students in countries all over the world. Program options include English teaching fellowships or independent research fellowships (with options for university study). Besides English language teaching and research opportunities, the Fulbright serves as a foreign relations program between the US and other countries. Fulbright fellows are expected to act as representatives of their country. There are currently 6 Grinnell graduates completing Fulbright Fellowships.

Volunteers for Peace
https://vfp.org/

VFP provides opportunities for volunteers to develop leadership skills and global connections. We advocate for civic engagement and encourage volunteers to apply their new skills as citizen diplomats, community activists and global leaders.

William J. Clinton Fellowship in India
http://aif.org/clinton–fellowship/

William J. Clinton Fellowship for Service in India is a 10–month leadership fellowship that pairs a select number of young professionals with credible NGOs and social enterprises in India in order to accelerate impact and create effective projects that are replicable, scalable, and sustainable. Applicants must be between the ages of 21 and 34 and completed an undergraduate degree. AIF provides a round trip ticket to India, insurance coverage, and a monthly stipend to each Fellow. The deadline to apply is February 1, 2015.
WorldTeach
http://www.worldteach.org/

WorldTeach is a non-profit, non-governmental organization founded in 1986 in response to the need for educational assistance in developing countries. WorldTeach has placed thousands of volunteer educators in communities throughout Asia, Latin America, Africa, Eastern Europe and the Pacific. Volunteers are placed in schools and host communities that specifically request WorldTeach volunteers and would otherwise be unable to afford qualified teachers. Volunteers receive training, language preparation, and field support, empowering them to make an impact that will last long after they leave.