

## **CONSIDERING A “GAP YEAR”**

A gap year is the year following your graduation that you can use as an alternative to graduate school or the typical path into the working world. The key here is intentionality, so do something practical instead of just waiting around for a job. Make sure to plan your re-entry into work or graduate school at least nine months before your program ends.

### **Here are some great ideas of what you can do in your Gap Year(s):**

- **Peace Corps (two+ years):** Travel overseas to make real differences in the lives of real people.
- **AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA (one to two years):** Learn new skills, acquire qualities of leadership, and gain a sense of satisfaction from taking on responsibilities that directly affect peoples' lives.
- **City Year (10 months):** Serve full-time in schools, working to improve student attendance, behavior, and course performance in English and math.
- **Coro (one year):** Develop skills; master tools needed to engage and empower communities; gain experience in government, business, labor, and not-for-profit community organizations; and participate in special community and political problem-solving processes.
- **Green Corps (one year):** Training program for environmental organizers.
- **Language Intensive Program (four months):** Research ways to become bilingual in 120 days.
- **Teach for America (two years):** Work to ensure that kids growing up in poverty get an education.
- **JET Program (Japan Exchange and Teaching Program for one year):** Serve in Japan's local government offices, as well as public and private elementary schools, junior high and senior high schools.
- **Catholic Charities:** Provide food, build strong communities, strengthen families, provide housing, respond to disasters, and meet basic human needs.
- **L'Arche:** Communities in the United States that provide homes and workplaces where people with and without intellectual disabilities live and work together as peers, create inclusive communities of faith and friendship, and transform society through relationships that cross social boundaries.
- **WorldTeach (summer or one-year programs):** Partners with governments and other organizations in developing countries to provide volunteer teachers to meet local needs and promote responsible global citizenship.

- **Lutheran Volunteer Corps (one year):** Places volunteers in full-time service positions at social-justice organizations across the United States for one or two years.
- **LaSallian Volunteers (short- and long-term assignments): Responds creatively to the educational needs of those in poverty by providing volunteers,** living in community with Brothers and other Lasallian partners.
- **Jesuit Volunteer Corps (one year or more):** Largest lay Catholic full-time volunteer program in the world and has been a pioneer in the service landscape for 40 years.
- **Fulbright U.S. Student Program (one year):** Gain experience in countries around the world.
- **Rostro de Cristo (one year):** Volunteer and retreat group immersion program in Duran and Guayaquil, Ecuador.
- **Post-Baccalaureate Internship:** Instead of acquiring a regular job, find an internship to learn if it is a career/company/organization for you. Example sites are [www.internships.com](http://www.internships.com) and [www.internshipprograms.com](http://www.internshipprograms.com).
- **Fellowships and Scholarships posted by McKendree:**  
<http://www.mckendree.edu/academics/achievements/fellowships/php>
- **Walkabout Adventure:** Design a tour or travel experience that fits your interests in a country of your choice.
- **National Urban Fellows:** Develops accomplished and courageous professionals of all ethnic and racial backgrounds, particularly people of color and women, to be leaders and change agents in the public and non-profit sectors, with a strong commitment to social justice and equity.
- **Diversity Abroad:** International organization which connects diverse students, recent graduates and young professionals with international study, intern, teach, volunteer, degree and job opportunities.
- **NCAA Leadership Development:** Provides education and training for college athletes, coaches and administrators to assist with the transition to life after college sports, to foster the growth of the next generation of leaders and to encourage athletics administrators to translate lessons learned through competition.
- **Various Fellowship and Scholarship Opportunities:**  
<http://www.mckendree.edu/academics/achievements/fellowships.php>

*Some Information adapted from presentation by Donald Asher, Asher Associates.*