

Planning is essential for a meaningful gap year

A gap year is an experiential semester or year typically taken between high school and college in order to deepen practical, professional, and personal awareness through internships, volunteer work, travel, and work.

- Some students participate in year-long programs
- Others may combine two or more short-term programs, or plan a trip on their own or with friends
- Many students apply to college as usual in the fall of senior year and then ask for a semester or year-long **deferral** from the college they choose to attend

Questions to consider:

- What do I want to learn?
- What kinds of things do I want to do or experience?
- How much structure do I want or need?
- Where in the world do I want to be?
- Can my family and I afford it?

Useful websites:

- www.usagapyear.org
- www.amigoslink.org (Amigos de las Americas)
- www.americangap.org
- www.leapnow.org (LeapNow: Transforming Education)
- www.nols.edu (National Outdoor Leadership NOLS)
- www.outwardbound.org/gap-year-semester-courses (Outward Bound)
- www.rusticpathways.com/gap (Rustic Pathways)

Free Programs:

- AmeriCorps
- VISTA
- National Civilian Community Corps
- Habitat for Humanity
- City Year
- Public Allies
- The Corps Network www.corpsnetwork.org
- World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms
- Global Volunteers
- International People's College in Denmark
- Masa Israel

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs, made up of three primary programs that each take a different approach to improving lives and fostering civic engagement. Members commit their time to address critical community needs like increasing academic achievement, mentoring youth, fighting poverty, sustaining national parks, preparing for disasters, and more. Work can be part-time or full-time. All members receive training at the beginning of their service, as well as project-specific training during service.

California Conservation Corps

The California Conservation Corps is a department within the California Natural Resources Agency. We are the oldest and largest conservation corps in the nation, certified by [The Corps Network](#), enrolling young men and women, 18 to 25, for a year of paid natural resource work and emergency response. Simply stated, the CCC puts youth and the environment together to benefit both. The young women and men of the Corps work hard protecting and restoring California's environment, responding to disasters, becoming stronger workers, citizens and individuals through their service.