

# THE GAP YEAR

An enhancement to the educational process for students who want to explore other interests between their high school and college years



## Service Growth Education



NEW  
TRIER

TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203

Post-High School Counseling Department

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**The New Trier Motto:**  
To commit minds to inquiry,  
hearts to compassion,  
and lives to the service of humanity.®

Cover photos:  
Clockwise from upper left:  
Meagan Flavey '10, Projects Abroad Ghana  
Grant Hertel '10, Where Their Be Dragons China  
Ben Lurie '12, City Year Boston  
Abby Fernandez '11, Real GAP UK Africa

Dear Parents,

As your student is about to finish high school, big decisions loom ahead. This booklet was put together as a guide to provide helpful information to start you on a quest for the perfect gap year experience – something that will be a good fit and will help your student continue to thrive and develop as a young adult. If that sounds familiar, it is the same philosophy used when considering which college is a good fit.

Now is a wonderful opportunity to chase a dream, to do something fulfilling or to explore the world and take a break from the educational treadmill. After all, your student has likely been going to school since he or she was three years old. A gap year is the time to explore and experience new people, cultures, activities and opportunities.

Students who take a gap year usually emerge more mature, self-confident and focused. They have new interests and much to talk about. Sometimes the intended course of study changes after completing a gap year. They develop newfound interests and ideas and often will clarify their goals for the future. For those students who are undecided, sometimes a new course of study based on their new experience will be selected.

As the coordinator of the gap year program, I am available to discuss any questions that you have regarding a gap year.

Sincerely,

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## Why is a Gap Year Something I Should Consider?

A gap year is a natural break in the educational process after high school for students who would like to explore interests before embarking on another four-plus years of school. Many students have been engaged in education since pre-school – resulting in 15 years of an educational experience. More students are taking the time to discover who they are and what they would like to do with their life. They are getting off the educational treadmill to gain a direction and focus in their life. A gap year can help a student discover a passion, build self-confidence and independence, and explore opportunities through hands-on learning.

New Trier High School recommends that students go through the college application process and then decide if they would like to participate in a gap year. Colleges generally allow accepted students to defer matriculation for a year of planned activities. A year to grow and mature in a different environment can result in a fresh commitment to academics on the college level.

In planning a gap year, it is important to have a structured plan in place, similar to a school year. Students will often break the year into two semesters or three trimesters and include some time working to offset the cost of some of the more costly programs or save for their college education.

A gap year is for students of all levels of ability and interests. Opportunities are endless. Students can experience internships, volunteer service, travel and language immersion programs, outdoor/farming/conservation/sustainable programs, the arts, helping children and developing skills and training in the building trades, cooking, sailing and SCUBA and EMT instruction.

Now is the time to get to know who you are and what you want in your life. Use this opportunity to plan your future.

## Things to Consider Before Taking a Gap Year

- Why do you want to do a gap year?
- What do you hope to learn from your gap year?
- What type of program are you considering – local, national, international?
- What is the emphasis – academic, volunteering, internship, teaching, getting certified in a skill, etc?
- What is the cost, is it a factor and how can I help supplement the cost?
- What type of health insurance do I need to have to make sure I am covered for emergencies?
- What are the health requirements (vaccinations) needed?
- What are safety issues I need to be aware of when travelling?
- How will I stay in touch with my family and friends?
- How will I adjust to culture shock going and coming home?

## GLOBAL INTERIM OPPORTUNITIES: A Sampling of Post-High School Experiences Before College

An asterisk (\*) next to a program's name indicates a lower-cost gap year program.

## Aardvark Israel

<http://www.aardvarkisrael.com/program-overview>

Aardvark Israel Immersion Programs offer students the opportunity to spend a semester or a year immersed in Israeli society. Participants are involved in the community through volunteer work and internships while learning about Israel and Judaism through both formal academic and informal education encounters. The 5-month semester program allows for students to spend 4 ½ months living in either the cultural heart of Israel – Tel Aviv – or 4 ½ months living in the spiritual heart of the Jewish people – Jerusalem. Gap year students experience life in both cities. In addition, semester students participate in the 2-week Sarel (Volunteers for Israel) program. Check out various add-ons in fields such as medicine and psychology, government and politics, digital media, entrepreneurship, Israeli military, hiking the Israel Trail, and spirituality. There are additional travel options through an international program to China and an exciting variety of European countries.

## Academic Explorers: Martial Arts in China

[www.AcademicExplorers.org](http://www.AcademicExplorers.org)

Challenge your body and mind with Martial Arts and Mandarin Chinese language study in Beijing, China. The program includes intensive daily classes in Mandarin Chinese, exclusive access to excellent martial arts instruction, accommodation in one of Beijing's most historical neighborhoods, visits to the Great Wall and the Forbidden City and a guided excursion to the legendary Shaolin Temple, the birthplace of martial arts. This is a semester program. Previous knowledge of martial arts or Chinese is not necessary to apply.

## African Leadership Academy

[www.alagapyear.org](http://www.alagapyear.org)

The African Leadership Academy seeks dynamic, motivated 17-19 year old leaders from around the world who have completed high school and are thrilled at the prospect of an intense, 10 month pre-university program in which they would build lasting friendships with Africa's future leaders, engage in deep study of the African continent, and design and implement a community service project that will have a lasting impact on a community in need. Students arrive on campus the first week in September and leave in late June. There is a four week mid-year vacation in late December and early January, and short one-week vacations in October and March in which students may live with a host family in South Africa or join a school trip. Students desiring to spend a shorter time at ALA may apply to the term abroad program.

## AFS Intercultural Programs

**800-AFS-INFO • [www.afs.org](http://www.afs.org)**

The Community Service Program is for young adults of 18 years or older. Participants volunteer with local organizations that address community needs such as helping street children or developing training programs with human rights workers, and are exposed to new customs, morals, ethics and values that challenge them to reflect on their own cultural norms. Projects vary by hosting country and participants' interests. AFS offers Community Service programs in more than 20 countries across the globe.

## Alliances Abroad

[www.allianceabroad.com](http://www.allianceabroad.com)

Founded in 1992, this group offers customized internship, work, teaching and volunteer programs for students and graduates in and outside of the USA. They specialize in a variety of programs to answer every individual and provide high-quality placement and support before, during and after the experience.

## \*AmeriCorps

**800-942-2677 • [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)**

AmeriCorps is an exciting program that offers young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 an opportunity to tackle some of our nation's most difficult challenges through service. There are thousands of intriguing programs to choose from, and they all include a living allowance, healthcare, and an additional stipend towards college once the program is completed. (Some programs also offer room and board.) There is no fee to apply. Members work in teams building homes for the homeless families, helping children learn to read, restoring forests and streams in national parks, and even providing disaster relief with the American Red Cross. AmeriCorps members don't just make a difference in the communities they serve—they make a difference in their own lives by gaining confidence and practical skills. Americorps State and National and Americorps NCCC are for recent high school grads.

## American Institute of Foreign Study

**800-727-2437 • [www.aifs.com](http://www.aifs.com)**

The American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) has more than 40 years of experience in organizing study abroad programs – summer advantage, college semester and/or year programs for high school graduates. Programs are provided in 16 countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Costa Rica, China, Czech Republic, England, France, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Peru, Russia, South Africa and Spain. Different programs have different options.

## Amerispan

**800-879-6640 • [www.amerispan.com](http://www.amerispan.com)**

Amerispan's academic semester abroad programs are available to college students who wish to study abroad for a semester, summer or quarter and earn transferable academic credit. They offer two distinct types of Academic Study Abroad programs in a variety of Spanish, French, German, Italian, and Portuguese-speaking countries so that students can find the study abroad program that meets their individual needs and interests. Amerispan offers a variety of scholarships and students can use their financial aid for Amerispan programs.

## Aspire

**[www.aspirebyapi.com](http://www.aspirebyapi.com)**

Aspire by Academic Programs International (API) provides high-quality study abroad experiences for recent high school graduates. Programs are located in France, Ireland, or Spain. All Aspire gap year and gap semester programs offer students the opportunity to earn college credit for their studies while abroad. In addition, Aspire gap year programs provide students with community involvement and volunteer opportunities. With Aspire on-site staff dedicated to ensuring that each student stays safe and healthy, students can concentrate on expanding their knowledge, foreign language competency, and interests.

## AustraLearn

**800-980-0033 • [www.australearn.org](http://www.australearn.org)**

AustraLearn and Queenstown Resort College have created a unique 18 week gap experience that allows students to develop the leadership characteristics, real world skills, and experience that employers and universities seek. A 16 week study program is also available.

## Aventure

**[www.aventure.co.uk](http://www.aventure.co.uk)**

Aventure is a United Kingdom program. They offer you overseas exploration, personal growth, and a deeper comprehension of the world where we live. Programs are offered in Africa, Asia or the Americas. Gap ventures are 3-5 months and include teaching, sports, community environment, travel, and adventure safaris. Short ventures are 5 weeks and include community projects, travel, and adventure activities and safaris. Actives ventures are 3 weeks and include community work, adventure sports, travel and safaris.

## Bel Camino

**305-877-4937 • [www.belcamino.org](http://www.belcamino.org)**

Bel Camino, based in the medieval university town of Siena, offers young adults a three-month immersion in the culture, spirit and landscape of Italy. Combining a home-stay, language study, and cultural excursions, together with weekly group discussions, instruction in yoga and the creative arts, and a week-long hike in the province of Tuscany, the program reflects the founder's passionate interest in walking and in cultivating the bel camino – the 'beautiful path' of a life lived with awareness.

## BridgeYear

**312-242-2868 • [www.bridgeyear.com](http://www.bridgeyear.com)**

The BridgeYear offers six different gap year Spanish study abroad programs in Santiago, Chile and Buenos Aires, Argentina. You can study Spanish for one semester or one year and you can spend your time in one or both countries.

## Bridgton Academy

**207-647-3322 • [www.bridgtonacademy.org](http://www.bridgtonacademy.org)**

Bridgton Academy is a boys-only preparatory school whose student body of 200 is composed entirely of postgraduate students. Located in North Bridgton, Maine, the Academy helps students develop academic skills, study skills, self-discipline, and confidence. The school offers 12 courses for transferable college credit, SAT prep, and athletics. The program offers a transitional experience between high school and college, rather than another year of high school. (See also “Independent Secondary Schools” on the last page)

## Building Bridges Coalition

**[www.buildingbridgescoalition.org](http://www.buildingbridgescoalition.org)**

The Building Bridges Coalition, a project of the Brookings Institute on International Volunteering and Service, is a consortium of leading international volunteer organizations, universities and colleges, corporations, and government agencies working collaboratively to double the number of international volunteers serving abroad. Over 10,000 opportunities are listed on this site.

## Center for Cultural Interchange

**312-944-2544 • [www.cci-exchange.com](http://www.cci-exchange.com)**

Established in 1985, the Center for Cultural Interchange (CCI) is a non-profit international education exchange organization dedicated to the promotion of cultural understanding, academic development and world peace. CCI is recognized by the U. S. Department of State as an official exchange visit program sponsor. Based in Chicago, Illinois, CCI organizes high school exchange, short-term group homestay, internship, work and travel, and language study programs in the United States and in over 30 countries around the world.

## CITY Term

**914-479-6502 • [www.cityterm.org](http://www.cityterm.org)**

Using New York City as the classroom and laboratory, CITYterm brings together seven residential faculty and 30 intellectually adventuresome students for a semester of intensive, experience-based learning. Cityterm challenges students to think, question, speak up and grow. It asks them to embrace new experiences and to share in the process of becoming more self-aware with peers from across the United States. The Masters School launched CITYterm in the fall of 1996.

## \*City Year

**312-464-9899 • [www.cityyear.org/chicago](http://www.cityyear.org/chicago)**

Designed as a model national service program, City Year unites youth, ages 17-24, from diverse backgrounds for a demanding academic year of full-time community service, leadership development and civic engagement. There are 17 CITY YEAR locations throughout the United States. City Year addresses unmet community needs, breaks down social barriers of race and class, and strengthens the bonds of community through service. There are four times throughout the year to apply. Only 1 out of 4 applicants makes the cut. They will know in 2-4 weeks if they are one of them. [Students earn a weekly stipend and receive an additional stipend at the end of the year of service to be applied toward their education.](#)

## College Internship Program

**877-566-9247 • [www.collegeinternshipprogram.com](http://www.collegeinternshipprogram.com)**

The College Internship Program provides comprehensive individualized academic, internship and independent living experiences for young adults, ages 18-25, with learning differences, Asperger's Syndrome, High Functioning Autism, Nonverbal Learning Differences, ADHD, Dyslexia, and PDD-NOS.

## Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE)

**800-331-1567 • [www.ciee.org](http://www.ciee.org)**

Spending a year or a semester living with a family abroad, studying and improving fluency in a modern language and volunteering in the community or working as an English teacher will allow students to immerse themselves in every aspect of the host culture and give their academic goals perspective and purpose. Day and weekend trips and other cultural excursions will provide an important dimension to understanding historical and social aspects of the country.

## Cross-Cultural Solutions

**[www.crossculturalsolutions.org](http://www.crossculturalsolutions.org)**

Cross-Cultural Solutions is a nonprofit working to address critical global issues by providing meaningful volunteer service to communities abroad, and contributing responsibly to local economies. Founded in 1995, CCS has worked with over 30,000 volunteers. The organization's projects are always sustainable and developed with community leaders, based on current community needs. CCS volunteers enjoy a unique opportunity to work alongside members of a local community, a chance to experience genuine cultural immersion, and an adventure of a lifetime.

## Cultural Experiences Abroad

**1-800-266-4441 [www.gowithcea.com](http://www.gowithcea.com)**

CEA provides college study abroad programs to U.S. and Canadian students in 15 countries and 28 cities across the globe. The countries include Argentina, Australia, China, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Russia, South Africa, and Spain. CEA creates and facilitates opportunities for personal growth and global understanding through quality international educational and cultural experiences. Visit the web site to explore the programs, the academics, the Global Campus Network, student services, and health and safety.

## Dynamy

**508-755-2571 • [www.dynamy.org](http://www.dynamy.org)**

Dynamy Internship is the oldest and only residential internship program in the country. Their mission is to offer young people 17-22, a transformational gap year (or semester) opportunity. Located in Worcester, MA, Dynamy Internship Year integrates full-time mentored internships in over 240 organizations with urban and backcountry leadership experiences, personal and college/career advising, city apartment living, and the company of a remarkable group of peers.

## Earthwatch

**800-776-0188 • [www.earthwatch.org](http://www.earthwatch.org)**

Earthwatch Institute is an international non-profit organization that brings science to life for people concerned about the Earth's future. Founded in 1971, Earthwatch supports scientific field research by offering volunteers the opportunity to join research teams around the world. This unique model is creating a systematic change in how the public views science and its role in environmental sustainability.

## El Casal

**93 217-9038 • [www.elcasalbarcelona.com](http://www.elcasalbarcelona.com)**

Do you want to do something different and exciting before heading off to college? Do you want to challenge yourself, renew your sense of discovery and gain perspective on the world around you? If so, El Casal, in Barcelona, Spain, offers a special opportunity in one of the most beautiful and engaging cities in Europe. El Casal is a multi-faceted program combining seminars in Spanish language and other subjects, travel, outdoor activities, internships and community service. You'll find just the right balance of structure and free time that will allow you to grow and explore in a rich and stimulating environment.



## Flying Fish

[www.flyingfish.com](http://www.flyingfish.com)

Every Flying Fish course has its share of students taking a gap year. At Flying Fish one gains qualifications that lead to interesting jobs in your gap year and for future vacations. Students become an experienced yacht skipper or action sports instructor and you can spend your holidays being paid to enjoy your favorite activity. This company is based in the UK, but works with many US students planning gap experiences.

## The French Culinary Institute

[www.frenchculinary.com](http://www.frenchculinary.com)

Located in New York City, the pros teach most of the 250 essential skills used in their famous fulltime Culinary Arts course. If you have ever dreamed of opening your own restaurant, becoming a chef to the stars, or hosting a show on the Food Network, it might be time to get your feet wet. Most culinary schools in the country offer abbreviated versions. Cost is \$6,875 for the 110 hours of instruction from famous professors.

## Frontier.ac.uk

[info@frontier.ac.uk](mailto:info@frontier.ac.uk)

Frontier offers 130 projects throughout Africa that provide a wide range of options. You could be volunteering on the popular Madagascar Marine Conservation project, which offers you the chance to dive in some of the world's best dive sites or take part in the Tanzania Wildlife Tracking and Community Adventure, where you can help monitor and conserve rare African wildlife. You also can involve yourself in the environmental restoration and big cat conservation in Namibia Cheetah and Environmental Conservation. The program offers a wide range of community, teaching and sports coaching opportunities.

## G.A.P. Adventures

800-465-5600 • [www.gapadventures.com](http://www.gapadventures.com)

Since 1990 G.A.P. Adventures has specialized in unique, small group outdoor adventure travel. They strive to show the real world by going off the beaten track, to the heart of the destination, and to meet the locals who call it home. They focus on culture, nature, and active travel. Create your own trip from over 1000 choices in 100 countries. Small international groups, excellent delicious local cuisine, varied and interesting transportation, special destinations, charming local accommodations, all come together to create an authentic adventure experience. G.A.P. Adventures offers a variety of trips, from active outdoor adventures to yacht based wildlife expeditions.

## Global Citizen Year

[www.globalcitizenyear.org](http://www.globalcitizenyear.org)

GCY is a unique program started by Abby Falik in 2009. It is an Oakland-based non-profit gap program. Abby did a gap year and had a negative experience before enrolling at Stanford and staying for her master's degree. Her master's thesis is the blueprint for this program. She spent two years at Harvard Business School developing a financial model for the program. In 2009, the program had 11 fellows. In 2012, they sent 92 students to Senegal, Brazil and Ecuador for nine months. The program is \$28,500, but few of the participants pay full price; 30% get a full scholarship. GCY is focused on preparing a new generation of global leaders. You must interview for the program. There is a critical need to find students who have leadership potential.

The fee includes:

- All costs associated with travel (domestic and international), room and board, and a monthly living stipend
- 2 week extensive leadership training program housed at Stanford before departure
- One month in-country training based in the capital city, focused on language immersion, cultural adjustment, and health and safety preparedness
- 7 months intensive, individualized language training
- Monthly in-country seminars led by staff and local experts
- Monthly one-on-one coaching sessions with experienced staff
- Personalized service-based apprenticeships in health, agriculture, education and other fields with local community partners

## Global College – Long Island University

718-780-4312 • [www.liu.edu/global](http://www.liu.edu/global)

A Global College education takes successive year-long experiences in other cultures and integrates them into a progressive four-year degree that allows students to travel to and study at centers in Africa, Asia and the Americas. Students engage with a variety of cultures and people through various learning methods including coursework and fieldwork, through service learning projects and internships, and through independent studies built upon their own interests developed in consultation with a faculty advisor. Over time, students gain skills, knowledge and the practical experience that will enable them to contribute positively to our rapidly globalizing world. Undergraduates may participate as freshman, transfer or study abroad applicants.

## Global Crossroad

866-387-7816 • [www.globalcrossroad.com](http://www.globalcrossroad.com)

Global Crossroad offers many volunteer abroad and internship abroad experiences, mini-escapes and summer escapes, paid teaching programs, rural community insights and cultural immersion programs to international volunteers in 20 countries across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Global Crossroad's internship abroad program offers 2-12 weeks of customized internship opportunities for students, researchers, and explorers in 20 different countries across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Most past participants have joined internships in health care, journalism, women's issues, culture, sustainable development, and business. However, Global Crossroad can craft an internship projects in nearly any area you wish.

## Global Leadership Adventures

858-771-0645 • [www.experienceGLA.com](http://www.experienceGLA.com)

Global leadership Adventures is the leader of a new model of international service-learning. By bringing together individuals from different cultures to collaborate on a service project, students learn first-hand about social issues in the world while also becoming aware of their own leadership potential. This organization initially started the African Leadership Academy, a full year program, and has expanded into other countries as a spring break and summer program.

## Global Learning Across Borders

[www.global-lab.org](http://www.global-lab.org)

Global Learning Across Borders offers three semester programs for high school gap students. They all feature experiential learning and cultural immersion. Each includes home-stays, service learning, language and cultural study, regional travel, trekking, and independent study projects. Programs are offered in China and Tibet, Greece, India, and Morocco. Through this program, one will gain a global consciousness, learn a new language, and realize just how interdependent and interconnected we all are.

## Global Volunteer Network

[www.globalvolunteernetwork.org](http://www.globalvolunteernetwork.org)

Working, volunteering, learning, living and traveling abroad for extended periods of time becomes the adventure of a lifetime for many. Whether you teach English to schoolchildren in Ghana, plant trees in Costa Rica or volunteer with the disabled in Argentina, the program offers academic year, short-term homestay, internship, work and travel, language study, environmental and volunteer programs in over thirty countries worldwide. The possibilities are endless.

## \*Habitat for Humanity

[www.habitat.org/ivp](http://www.habitat.org/ivp)

Habitat for Humanity (Part of the Americorp Umbrella) has several volunteer opportunities that are available to adults age 18 or older who possess a high school diploma or GED. Habitat for Humanity, in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service (<http://www.cns.gov/>), provides volunteer opportunities for people of diverse ages and backgrounds. CNCS is a part of the USA Freedom Corps. Habitat also has a partnership with the National Civilian Community Corps. This is a 10-month residential national service program for young men and women between 18 and 24 years of age. Americorps NCCC (<http://www.americorps.gov/about/programs/nccc.asp>) members serve on teams that meet community needs across the country, and each year some of those teams spend weeks serving with Habitat affiliates. In the International Volunteer Program, (<http://www.habitat.org/ivp/>) you can spend 3 to 24 months living and working abroad! A variety of volunteer positions are available, on and off the construction site.

## Himalayan Gap

[www.himalayangap.com](http://www.himalayangap.com)

Himalayan Gap organizes cultural immersion programs in India. This is a very personalized program. They run two four-week summer programs and a 13-week gap semester program. The program includes Hindi language lessons, Indian classical music and dance lessons, yoga lessons, volunteering opportunities, hiking, rafting, and cultural activities. At the end of this core program, students have the option of going on a 3-week trek to the base camp of Mt. Everest in Nepal. They take no more than ten students and tailor the program to each participant's needs and passions.

## Intrax Study Abroad

**800-579-1709 x 610 • [www.intraxstudyabroad.com/apply-now](http://www.intraxstudyabroad.com/apply-now)  
[dmolnar@intraxstudyabroad.com](mailto:dmolnar@intraxstudyabroad.com)**

Dynamic study abroad programs are offered in 16 countries for a summer, semester or an academic year. A personal program advisor is assigned to you the moment you contact Intrax. They are committed to making the experience to study abroad easy and safe for you. Programs are provided in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, England, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

## \*InterExchange

[www.interexchange.org](http://www.interexchange.org)

Numerous working abroad opportunities are provided through this organization. All you need is a little ingenuity and a willingness to work. For example, travel to Ghana where you will have a chance to work with preschool or primary school children. From distributing and collecting library books, to assisting with after school activities, to teaching in the classroom, volunteers grow to appreciate this peaceful and welcoming country. The entire cost (which includes food, housing, and assistance) is \$2,945 for the year. Students just need to get themselves there.

## International School for Earth Studies

[www.earth-studies.ca/](http://www.earth-studies.ca/)

As a family owned and operated enterprise, ISES values a strong family environment. The program provides students access to wildlife and a diverse natural environment nestled in the hills of Western Quebec. ISES encourages students to develop a broader and more meaningful world perspective. The organization is looking for the next generation of young adults to share in its vision for sustainability and its commitment to preserving the environment and to protecting wildlife. The goal is to balance modern technology with traditional sustainable practices. ISES offers students the opportunity to improve wilderness skills that can be beneficial in even the most urban environments: observation and awareness, confidence and empowerment. Students gain confidence in working with different animal groups. Patience is exercised when working with baby orphaned animals. Honesty and accountability are primary values that nurture leadership traits. ISES encourages students to think 'outside the box' in creating solutions.

## Jewish United Fund

**312-346-6700 • [www.juf.org/israel](http://www.juf.org/israel)**

Israel and Overseas Programs are available in Israel that offer a number of unique opportunities for personal growth and development in a variety of settings. There are programs which allow one to skim the richness of life in Israel as well as those designed for serious in-depth study. If you need help in selecting a program and for general information about Israel programs contact the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago (312-444-2895).

## LEAPYear Experiential College Alternative

888-424-5327 • [www.leapnow.org](http://www.leapnow.org)

LEAPYear is a way for people between the ages of 17 and 20 to get the experiences and teachings needed to make a transition into creative, independent adulthood. It provides a full palette of physical, mental, social, spiritual and cultural challenges. It would be very difficult to complete the program without becoming a well-rounded and mature individual. The program is meant to replace the first year of college or function as a year “on” between high school and college. The year contains formal and informal rites of passage - a vital necessity in a society that does not give its youth markers for the journey into adulthood. This 9-month program is tremendously varied. It includes a three-month experiential group semester of language, service and cultural immersion in Central America or Asia, a 12-week solo internship of your own choosing, career and job-readiness counseling, a curriculum of Life Skills Learning, and a formal Rite of Passage that also involves the parents.

## LEAPYear Internships

[www.leapnow.org](http://www.leapnow.org)

Internships are available with LEAPyear program or separately. LEAPNOW offers low-cost three-month and longer internships throughout the world. There are opportunities to serve and gain real work experience in the fields of arts and crafts, schools and teaching, social service, environment and ecology, animals, outdoor work and much more. Specific examples include: New Zealand Outdoor Leadership School, work at a ranch in Patagonia, teacher’s assistant in Tanzania, teach at a school in Turkey, Guatemalan ecolodge, medical clinic in India, organic farm in Spain, wildlife refuge in Bolivia, teacher’s assistant in Honduras, teach on a remote island in Micronesia, environmental conservation in Ecuador, social awareness and job training in Tanzania.

## Live New Zealand Limited

[www.livenewzealand.co.nz](http://www.livenewzealand.co.nz)

This is New Zealand’s leading specialist in internship programs for foreign nationals. They tailor internship placements that deliver real value. Internships are offered to gap students, undergraduates, professionals and anyone seeking career advancement. There are no visa requirements or fixed dates. One can be in New Zealand in a week! Visit the web site to speak to an internship specialist.

## Magic Carpet Rides

360-376-8900 • [www.magiccarpetrides.org](http://www.magiccarpetrides.org)

Magic Carpet Ride is a non-profit educational program offering high school graduates a “gap year” for international service and travel. The experiential curriculum fosters development of life skills and discovery of one’s passions. Guatemala’s rich cultural heritage and natural beauty provide a stunning setting for nine months of cultural immersion. Learn Spanish through one-to-one instruction and live with a Guatemalan family. Volunteer your service in one of Central America’s poorest countries. Explore a project of your choice such as investigating the Maya heritage through archeology. Enjoy activities including white-water rafting, making tamales, and jungle trekking. For program details and application, please visit our website.

## Map the Gap International

203-672-5950 • [www.mapthegapinternational.com](http://www.mapthegapinternational.com)

MTGI offers structured “service-learning programs” that combine language and cultural immersion, community service, and sociopolitical insights from experts to create a meaningful and impacting adventure for students. Programs – in Mexico, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Italy and Thailand – include 3 weeks of intensive language study, followed by ongoing language support; 8-10 cultural and recreational excursions; community service placements, with orientation and support; presentations from experts about issues affecting the communities served; room and board (usually home stay); international health insurance coverage; transportation to and from airport in host country, as well as for all planned activities; 24-hour local support; and possible college credit.

# MASA Israel Journey

[www.masaisrael.org](http://www.masaisrael.org)

MASA enables young Jews (ages 18-30) from around the world to build a lasting relationship with Israel, strengthen their Jewish identity, and gain meaningful and beneficial experiences by participating in a long-term program in Israel. MASA is the culmination of a dream expressed by Ariel Sharon that all Jews should spend a semester to a year in Israel. Officially established by the government of Israel and the Jewish Agency for Israel in 2003, MASA is your gateway to over 150 long-term programs in Israel. All MASA programs include: Hebrew classes, trips once a month to different parts of Israel, Jewish program determined by each group, Zionist education that can be extreme right and moving in degrees to extreme left, and contact with local Israelis, shows, museums and other cultural programs. Examples of programs include:

- **Bezalal Academy of Art and Design**  
[www.israelexperience.org.il/bezalel](http://www.israelexperience.org.il/bezalel)

Designed for young international artists yearning to pursue their passion abroad. Located at Hebrew University, students have the option of a semester or a year program.

- **Budokan**  
[www.budokanisrael.com](http://www.budokanisrael.com)

Budokan is a challenging, 5-month program that combines excellent martial arts instruction, innovative Hebrew and Jewish heroes studies, inspiring field trips, and volunteering options. This unique "body and spirit" program lets you improve your fitness, develop personal skills and earn college credit.

- **Dance Journey**  
[www.masaisrael.org/programs/dance-journey](http://www.masaisrael.org/programs/dance-journey)

Two dance companies and the MASA dance gap students make up the 60 dancers at the kibbutz. Students have 12-hour days. They begin with ballet because it develops technique. Gap students will need to audition in the future. The school brings in dance companies to show different styles and techniques. The program is 5 months or a year. Dance in Israel is top notch.

- **Eco-Israel**  
[www.eco-israel.org](http://www.eco-israel.org)

Offers English speaking Jewish students a 5-month professional apprenticeship and coursework in permaculture and sustainable living.

- **Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzliya**  
[www.idc.ac.il](http://www.idc.ac.il)

IDC is the first private, not-for-profit school in Israel. Gap students often stay for the three-year degree program that is equivalent to a 4-year program in the U.S. All classes are taught in English. IDC is a premier social science university in the world. Students select business, computer science, government, communications or psychology. A quarter of the enrollments (1200/5500) are international students (400 North Americans). FAFSA is recognized there.

- **Israel Challenge**  
[www.israelchallenge.org](http://www.israelchallenge.org)

Choose your own plan. First stage is living in a kibbutz for 6 weeks and offers a unique volunteer experience. The second stage is an 8 weeks option for community service – Israel Red Cross (MDA), Maccabi Haifa Soccer School or Marva (Israel Defense Army). The third stage includes 4 weeks in Eilat taking courses in Mediterranean Cuisine, photography and video, scuba diving or community security.

- **Kibbutz Ulpan**  
[www.kibbutzulpan.org/page.asp?ln=eng](http://www.kibbutzulpan.org/page.asp?ln=eng)

Experience working in a classic Israeli environment on a kibbutz while at the same time taking classes in Hebrew language. There are two 5-month programs. There are over 224 kibbutzes in Israel with over 400 gap students.

- **Kivunim (New Directions)**  
[www.kivunim.org](http://www.kivunim.org)

Located at Hebrew Union College, the program provides a unique opportunity for international travel and study. With a focus on understanding the history and contemporary life of international Jewish communities, KIVUNIM is committed to building "world-consciousness."

- **Ma'ase Olam-Tzofim (IsraelScouts)**

[www.olam.maase.org.il](http://www.olam.maase.org.il)

This groundbreaking program brings North American Jews to Israel to do meaningful social justice work, learn together, travel around the country, and live together in groups. All of this is done alongside a group of Israelis, rather than the standard North American bubble in Israel. All of the volunteers will serve as English language instructors to underprivileged Israelis. The program is \$5,500. A Masa Israel Journey grant of \$1,000 is available to eligible participants.

- **Mechinat Nachshon**

[www.masaisrael.org/programs/nachshon-mechinat-israeli](http://www.masaisrael.org/programs/nachshon-mechinat-israeli)

Prepares participants from overseas the opportunity to be immersed in an Israeli environment. Students attend the Israeli Preparatory Institute for Social Leadership. They need a basic Hebrew background and need to be very mature. The program is selective.

- **Nativ Program – Conservative Jewish Movement**

[www.nativ.org](http://www.nativ.org)

Provides the opportunity to enjoy a fulfilling Conservative Jewish lifestyle, which includes university study, volunteer work, a kibbutz experience, and innovative leadership training. This is a full year program.

- **Netzer Program – Reform Jewish Program**

[www.netzeryear.org](http://www.netzeryear.org)

Located at Hebrew Union College, a rabbinical college in Jerusalem, this is a full year program. The program produces leaders in the Reform Zionist Movement. Student organization involved in this movement include: USY, NFTY, LJY and RSY.

- **Rimon School of Jazz and Contemporary Music**

[www.israelexperience.org.il/rimon](http://www.israelexperience.org.il/rimon)

This is Israel's largest independent professional music school for the advanced study of contemporary music. Gap students attend for a year, but can stay on for the three-year degree program in Composition and Arranging, Film Scoring, Song Writing, Jazz Performance, General Performance, Music Production and Engineering, Music Education, and an advanced Combined Program of Composition, Performance and Production.

- **Rothberg International School – Hebrew University**

[www.huji.ac.il/huji/eng/index.htm](http://www.huji.ac.il/huji/eng/index.htm)

Attracts independent students and they must register for 16 academic credits. All classes are in English, but the students take a 200-hour summer Ulpan (10 credits) to learn Hebrew. Students can attend for a semester or a year.

- **Technion**

[www.technion.ac.il/root/index.html](http://www.technion.ac.il/root/index.html)

Gap students study in English. Students choose one of three options: Option A is a full four-year degree program, Option B students apply to transfer to the Hebrew Program, Option C students apply to transfer credit to a U. S. university. Students earn engineering degrees in civil, environmental, and transportation. Students need AP Physics and an honors curriculum in addition to an interview, essay and a 700 SAT or 30 ACT in math.

- **Yachad Gap Year**

[dan.yachadgap@gmail.com](mailto:dan.yachadgap@gmail.com)

Yachad offers Jewish 18-19 year-olds from around the world the chance to participate in Israeli "Mechina" programs. For more than 25 years, "Mechina" Programs have sought to build the next generation of leaders in Israeli society, by offering Israeli youth the chance to take a year after high school to engage in intensive study, community service and exploration of the land and people of Israel, all while becoming part of a tight-knit community of talented and highly-motivated peers. This is the most immersive gap year program in Israel, with a track to fit every participant.

- **Young Judea**

[www.youngJudaea.org](http://www.youngJudaea.org)

Immersed in Israel for 9 months, the program is divided into three components: community service, Jerusalem studies, and Israeli experience. This is the largest year abroad opportunity in Israel.

## \*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)

[www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)

This is a residential program for 18-24 year olds with campuses in Colorado, California, Maryland, and Iowa. Modeled after the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s, NCCC is like college without the homework: participants live in dorm rooms, eat in a cafeteria and interact with a group of people 24 and under. They move from project to project and from state to state – doing everything from helping the American Red Cross with hurricane relief efforts, to building low-income housing with Habitat for Humanity, to helping combat soil erosion with the U. S. Forest Service. They are trained in CPR and first aid. Many are hired down the road by the nonprofits they serve, and everyone gets room, board, stipend and a \$4,725 education award.

## National Outdoor Leadership School

**800-710-6657 • [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu)**

Founded in 1965, NOLS takes people of all ages on real wilderness expeditions, teaching outdoor skills, leadership and environmental ethics in some of the world's wildest and most awe-inspiring classrooms. With courses ranging from 10 days to a full academic year, students learn the skills necessary to be comfortable, responsible wilderness travelers and leaders long after the course is over.

## Outward Bound

**866-467-7651 • [www.outwardbound.org](http://www.outwardbound.org)**

Celebrating over 40 years and more than 500,000 alumni, Outward Bound USA provides challenging adventure education for youth and adults. Their mission is to inspire character development and self-discovery in people of all ages and walks of life through challenge and adventure, and to impel them to achieve more than they ever thought possible, to show compassion for others and to actively engage in creating a better world.

## Oxford Advanced Studies Programs

[www.oasp.ac.uk](http://www.oasp.ac.uk)

Participants look for new perspectives while expanding their intellectual and cultural horizons. The educational experience puts an emphasis on developing independent thinking processes and encouraging active participation in the learning situation. Students may choose to broaden the scope of their Oxford experience by taking an internship alongside their academic courses one day a week. Most students take a room in a private house, with a family with breakfast and evening meal provided.

## Pacific Challenge

**800-655-3513 • [www.pacificchallenge.org](http://www.pacificchallenge.org)**

Pacific Challenge offers unique and extensively researched study abroad and experiential programs to the most exciting places on earth, carefully blending adventure, cultural immersion, eco-tourism ideals, and personal and leadership development. Countries include Australia, New Zealand, South America and Nepal.

## Pacific Discovery

**800-655-3415 • [www.pacificdiscovery.org](http://www.pacificdiscovery.org)**

Pacific Discovery is an experiential program that combines study abroad, adventure travel, cultural immersion and volunteering. They provide active, intimate and enthralling real-life discoveries exploring Asia and the Pacific Rim. For the discerning and independent minded traveler they offer thoughtfully designed itineraries, blending ecotourism ideals, cultural insights and adventures.

## Projects Abroad

888-839-3535 • [www.projects-abroad.org/gap-year-abroad](http://www.projects-abroad.org/gap-year-abroad)

A gap year is a great opportunity to put your time into a meaningful and rewarding volunteer program, and Projects Abroad offers a wide range of opportunities and regions to suit your interests. Their continuous presence overseas and unparalleled in-country support from their international staff ensures that your experience will be worthwhile.

Through the gap year international programs, you will not only provide beneficial aid and services to your community, but you will also gain from your cross-cultural immersion. As part of the global economy, you will help create local employment. Volunteers will learn from their placements and the people they meet while gaining experience in a chosen field.

## \*Rotary Youth Exchange International

847-866-3000 • [www.rotary.org/en/StudentsAndYouth/YouthPrograms/RotaryYouthExchange](http://www.rotary.org/en/StudentsAndYouth/YouthPrograms/RotaryYouthExchange)

As a Rotary Youth Exchange student, you will spend up to a year living with a few host families and attending school in a different country. Whether you participate in Rotary's long-term or short-term Youth Exchange programs, you'll learn a new way of living, a great deal about yourself, and maybe even a new language. You will also be an ambassador, teaching people you meet about your country, culture and ideas. You can help bring the world closer – and make some good friends in the process.

## Rothberg International School

[Http://overseas.huji.ac.il](http://overseas.huji.ac.il)

Hebrew University's Rothberg International School offers a variety of programs to graduating high school students! You can enroll in the freshman or gap year programs or spend a summer at RIS. Our program includes an Ulpan in Hebrew and/or Arabic language instruction, and a wide variety of courses taught in English, which can count towards your degree. Rothberg also offers financial aid, on-campus housing, extracurricular activities and excursions around the city and country. While our school is in Israel, our office is in New York. Call our toll free number (800) 404-8622. We look forward to seeing you in Jerusalem.

## Rustic Pathways

[www.rusticpathways.com/gap](http://www.rusticpathways.com/gap)

Rustic Pathways has been an innovative leader in the fields of experiential learning, international volunteer work, and student travel. Programs are offered in Asia, Africa, the South Pacific, Central and South America. Within these regions, they have extensive knowledge and resources available to create an endless array of extraordinary community service, language immersion, and cross-cultural adventure programs. They offer 45 different gap programs. Students can join for a few months, a semester, or a full year. Their Gap for Good Program starts as low as \$1200 per month, making gap year enrichment programs accessible for most students. Students can begin their trip at any time of the year, and the programs can be combined, allowing students to customize their gap year experience.

## School for Field Studies

800-989-4435 • [www.fieldstudies.org](http://www.fieldstudies.org)

SFS offers both semester and summer programs. The goal of SFS is to enable students to come away from their experience with an understanding of the complexity and inter-relatedness of environmental issues, as well as an increased commitment and new skills to help improve the environment and the lives of people dependent on that environment. Students might help educate island schoolchildren in the Caribbean; examine alternative methods of agriculture in Costa Rica, or help fishermen in Mexico. Taking an "interim" year between college and high school can be a marvelous opportunity for students to grow, mature, and prepare for the challenges ahead of them.

## SeaMester

800-317-6789 • [www.seamester.com](http://www.seamester.com)

Seamester delivers unique educational journeys at sea where students spend a semester sailing between islands, countries, even continents throughout global locations. It offers students the gift of discovering the world by sea, knowledge beyond the classroom, and their utmost potential. Set your course and study abroad by spending a semester at sea exploring the world. Along the way, earn college credits and work toward professional certifications in sailing and scuba diving in some of the world's most incredible destinations.



## Semester at Sea

[www.semesteratsea.org](http://www.semesteratsea.org)

The Semester at Sea study-abroad experience is now available to gap year students. Get a taste for the entire world as you explore 8-12 international ports and communities on global topics with students from around the country, take part in service projects and cross-cultural opportunities in port, and head back to college with a defined sense of the world. Students must be accepted at an accredited college or university. They must provide proof of strong performance at the high school level, including a standardized test score, AP test results, teacher recommendations, graded academic paper and good academic and judicial standing. There are three cruises that take place in the fall, spring and May (26 days).

## School Year Abroad

[www.sya.org/vietnam](http://www.sya.org/vietnam) 978-725-6828 (ext. 114)

SYA Vietnam is a gap year opportunity for students considering a post-graduate experience before college. SYA Vietnam is designed around a service learning experience and focuses on the issues of poverty and sustainable development. Students experience the issues they study in real contexts and in real time. Students can participate for the semester or for the entire year.

## Southern France Youth Institute

208-263-4974 • [www.sfyi.org](http://www.sfyi.org)

SFYI International School offers a gap year study abroad program for young adults interested in other cultures, the arts, adventure, travel, and language immersion. Located in the quaint French village of Villesèque des Corbieres, students will immerse themselves in the language and culture of this proud region. Extensive travel and lessons span from Spain and France to the far reaches of South Africa. While artistry and cultures influence our students' experiences, the geography also offers boundless potential for outdoor experiences, such as canyoning in Spain and camel trekking in Morocco. Experience a combination of culture and activities not often offered in most educational settings.

## \*Student Conservation Association

603-543-1700 • [www.thesca.org](http://www.thesca.org)

SCA offers 3-to-12 month, expense-paid internship opportunities in all 50 states, in more than 50 professional fields with the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, and state and local agencies, among others. Most SCA interns work one-on-one alongside conservation professionals, while a few others work in small groups, under SCA supervision, doing wilderness restoration, exotic plant management, fire fuels mitigation, and environmental education. Corps members spend 3-10 months of their time devoted to critical environmental issues such as wildfire management and education, trail restoration and maintenance, environmental education, and invasive species eradication. This is a great opportunity to give back while you learn from the land on the land.

## Study Abroad Italy

[www.studyabroaditaly.com](http://www.studyabroaditaly.com)

Study abroad Italy (SAI) offers U.S. and international students the finest English-speaking programs in Florence, Rome, Sicily, and Milan and a new program in London. There are no language requirements to attend any of SAI's programs. They process admissions and registration, provide accommodations, visa and travel, advising student services and answers to your general questions. SAI is affiliated with close to 100 North American and international colleges and universities.

## Thames Academy at Mitchell College

800-443-2811 • [www.mitchell.edu/thamesacademy](http://www.mitchell.edu/thamesacademy)

Thames Academy is Mitchell College's innovative post-graduate or pre-college transitional experience. It is a year of academic preparation that students take between the end of high school and the start of their college studies. Unlike traditional post-graduate programs at independent prep schools, Thames Academy enables students to take a reduced load of college level courses for credit. It is also unique in that it provides a highly structured academic program within a collegiate environment and co-curricular interaction with two- year and four-year students. Students admitted to Thames Academy will have already obtained their high school diploma and are college age.

## \*United Planet

<http://www.unitedplanet.org/>

For more than a decade, United Planet has brought together thousands of people all over the world in the effort to build cross-cultural understanding and provide vital services to communities in need. Their guiding principle is that relationships are the building blocks of a more united planet. As an international nonprofit organization, they have earned a reputation for caring, excellence, and respect for everyone who works with them: their volunteers, their local projects, their families and team members. United Planet works hard to make their prices as reasonable as possible, while maintaining their personalized service and standards of excellence. Their fees reflect unparalleled support for the volunteer and real service to sustainable projects in the community.

## Up With People

**877-264-8856 • [www.upwithpeople.org](http://www.upwithpeople.org)**

Up With People provides students with an extraordinary six month tour. Our student ambassadors experience an intense, hands-on education in which they form a global network of lifelong friendships. Up With People students travel with 100 young adults from over 20 countries to many fascinating cities on several continents. They live with host families in each city, develop and refine leadership skills beneficial to any career path, conduct service learning projects, perform a one-hour professional musical production in each community, and gain college credit at several universities in the United States.

## \*Volunteer for Peace

[www.vfp.org](http://www.vfp.org)

The organization is a non-profit membership program that offers placement in over 3,000 volunteer projects in more than 100 countries. VFP also offers 50-60 service projects in the US each year. Volunteer projects bring people from different countries together in a cooperative effort to live, work and have fun. There are a wide variety of volunteer service projects available from sustainable agriculture to environmental protection, helping elderly and orphans to preserving archaeological sites. VFP is affordable. There is a \$300 placement fee for a multi-week placement that includes food, accommodation and work materials. Volunteers arrange and pay their own transportation.

## \*Washington Internship Program

**202-829-5364 • [www.washingtoninternship.com](http://www.washingtoninternship.com)**

Students select internships according to their areas of interests, such as government, the media, and national institutions in a variety of fields, federal agencies, and private industries. International relations, journalism, law, medicine, public relations, business, the arts, science and technology, education, and counseling are among the many specialties that students pursue.

Students take an evening course with the staff and guest instructors. Guest speakers, field trips, slide shows, and recommended readings are part of the program.

Housing (both apartments and dormitories) are available through Georgetown University and other area colleges as well as three nonprofit agencies that have apartments and townhouses for interns.

## where there be dragons

**800-982-9203 • [www.wheretherebedragons.com](http://www.wheretherebedragons.com)**

While programs vary in focus, common to all programs is rugged and often gritty travel to infrequently visited towns and villages – places where traditional culture is rich, and where Western culture has made few inroads. With Dragons you take more than a trip; you partake in a profoundly educational experience that utilizes special in-country contacts, structured program elements, and the backgrounds of trip leaders to transform each journey into an educational adventure. A Dragons program is not a tour; rather, it is an encounter that puts students close to the lived experiences of people in Asia. For students who choose to take an interim year or time off from high school or college, Dragons has developed exciting programs in India and China.

## Woolman Semester

**530-273-3183 • [www.woolman.org](http://www.woolman.org)**

The Woolman Semester is a high school semester studies program for juniors and seniors, and first year post-graduates. Through a focus on the issues of peace, justice and sustainability, the Woolman Semester enriches a typical high school curriculum with seminar-style course work and experiential opportunities that promote life-long learning, personal growth and intellectual commitment.

## Workaway

[www.workaway.info](http://www.workaway.info)

Workaway.info holds a database of families, individuals or organizations in an extensive range of different countries that have registered and are looking for volunteer help in a large range of different fields. Workaway introduces working travelers and language learners to like-minded hosts, without paying expensive agency fees. This is a low cost program and is for the independent student.

## WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities On Organic Farms)

[www.woof.org](http://www.woof.org)

This is a world wide network started in the UK in 1971, and has since become an international movement that is helping people share more sustainable ways of living. In return for volunteer work, WWOOF hosts offer food, accommodation and opportunities to learn about organic lifestyles. The organization links individuals wanting to volunteer on organic farms with people who are looking for volunteer help. The volunteer helpers choose the host that most interests them and make direct contact to arrange a stay. Volunteers usually live as part of the family.

## Young Judaea

**212-303-4584 • [www.youngjudaea.org](http://www.youngjudaea.org)**

Young Judaea a dynamic year of study and volunteering in Israel for recent high school graduates. Since its establishment in 1956, Young Judaea's Year Course in Israel has provided over 4,400 participants with a challenging year of education and life-impacting experiences. Year Course is staffed by highly qualified educators, counselors and tour guides who are dedicated to a quality program of formal and informal education within a supportive, university-level environment. Contact Robyn Miller at 847-942-7970 or visit the website.

## Youth For Understanding

**800-833-6243 • [www.YouthForUnderstanding.org](http://www.YouthForUnderstanding.org)**

YFU International exchange program has many opportunities for year, semester, and summer students in 35 countries. YFU also offers a 13th Year Abroad program for those students who have just graduated, deferred college admissions, or are deciding what's next. Some of the programs have an academic component. Prices vary from \$7000-\$9000 for the year, with room, board, all airfare, classes, and costs included. Students benefit from an increased understanding of another culture, learn from the unique strengths of academic institutions abroad, and become a part of a global family. To learn more about the benefits of an international cross-cultural exchange program you can visit the YFU website.

## Youth International

[www.youthinternational.org](http://www.youthinternational.org)

Youth International focuses upon inter-cultural exchange, volunteer work, home stays, and outdoor adventure. Travel for three months, from September to December or February to May, with a team of up to 14 people, ages 18 to 25, and two leaders. Explore three different countries in Asia (Thailand, India, Vietnam) or South America (Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador). Help build an orphanage in Bolivia, live with tribal families in Thailand, meditate with Tibetan monks in the Himalayas, visit the Taj Mahal, do conservation work in the Ecuadorian rainforest, sail the Galapagos Islands, hike the Inca trail to Machu-Picchu, and much more!

## Youth Outreach Volunteer

[www.gicarg.org](http://www.gicarg.org)

GIC Argentina is a gap year organization providing programs for students and adults for many years. South America is an amazing location for a gap year – an inexpensive continent but rich in culture and adventure. Whether you are interested in interning, volunteering, teaching English or getting certified to teach English, or learning Spanish or taking other courses at a university in Argentina, we likely have a gap year program for you. If you are thinking about taking a gap year in South America, check out the web site under gap year in South America.

## OTHER RESOURCES

### Independent Secondary Schools

800-541-5908

[www.boardingschools.com](http://www.boardingschools.com)

The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS) is the only U.S.-based non-profit educational association exclusively serving American and international boarding schools and students. Many schools offer a post-graduate year for students who want to enrich their academic, athletic, and/or leadership experience.

### Recommended Reading:

[The Complete Guide To The Gap Year: The Best Things To Do Between High School and College](#) by Kristin White

This is the go-to book for anyone considering a year to recharge, to follow a passion, to become immersed in another culture, or to find their love of learning again. It includes everything a student, parent, or guidance counselor would want to know about the gap year, including what a gap year is, what it is not, and why it can have a positive impact on a young life.

[The Gap Year Advantage](#) by Karl Haigler and Rae Nelson, who have a combined 40 years of experience in the fields of education policy and practice. They have written a comprehensive guide to planning time off before or during college. Taking a “gap year” between high school and college or structuring time off during college offers the opportunity for students to gain focus and discipline, learn to set realistic goals, get real world experience, and build a stand-out resume.

[Ready or Not, Here Life Comes](#) by Mel Levine, M. D. “Instead of making a smooth transition into adulthood, many students find themselves trapped in their teenage years, traveling down the wrong career road, unable to function in the world of work...These young people have failed...to properly assess their strengths and weaknesses and have never learned the basics of choosing and advancing through stages of a career.”

[Time Out or Burn-Out for the Next Generation](#) by William Fitzsimmons, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid, Harvard College, Marlyn McGrath Lewis, Director of Admissions, Harvard College, Charles Ducey, Adjunct Lecturer in Psychology, Harvard Graduate School of Education. “The pressures placed on many children probably have the unintended effect of delaying a child’s finding themselves and succeeding on their own terms. Burn-out is an inevitable result of trying to live up to alien goals. Time out can promote discovery of one’s own passions.”

### USA Gap Year Guide

This is a comprehensive summary of gap programs that attend the USA Gap Fairs. The booklet includes a brief description of the program and contact website.

### The Gap Year: Service, Growth, Education

This is a list of gap programs that attend the New Trier High School Gap Fair, additional programs that our students have attended, current books to aid in the gap year search, gap consultants, and web resources. The online version can be found at <http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/page.aspx?id=4898>. Go to document link on the right hand side and select Gap Year Information.

## GAP Consultant:

### **Center for Interim Programs Princeton Office** **Holly Bull 609-683-4300 • [www.interimprograms.com](http://www.interimprograms.com)**

Interim offers individuals of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to explore different areas of interest via a personally tailored, experience-based format. Since its inception in 1980, INTERIM has designed creative “time on” for over 5,000 young people. They have built relationships with organizations worldwide and offer a database of over 5,200 programs opportunities worldwide. Programs are yearlong. Holly Bull is the director of Interim Programs.

### **Crossroads Advisors** **Aimee Long 847-226-2788 Julie Ward 847-224-9132**

Crossroads Advisors is a Chicago area gap year advisory business that focuses on bridging the transition between high school and college. They work to develop a customized plan, tailored to your budget, that takes time out of your life from one week to one year to explore your interests through volunteerism, travel and education. The Crossroads process includes helping you define the purpose of your gap year and putting together a plan that accomplishes your goals.

### **Student Extended Experiences Consulting Inc.** **Marsha Ray 847-374-0791, [seecray@sbcglobal.net](mailto:seecray@sbcglobal.net)** **[www.seectimeout.com](http://www.seectimeout.com)**

In 1998, Marsha Ray founded Student Extended Experiences Consulting, an organization that helps students design gap year, college sabbatical, and study abroad experiences. These opportunities would take you down different paths, but always paths of your choice. It's in the process of exploring yourself that you grow, think differently, and define your academic path and your career goals.

## Web Resources

### **[www.gapyear.com](http://www.gapyear.com)**

A complete guide to “taking time out”

### **<http://www.planetgapyear.com/>**

Provides frequently asked questions about a gap year, stories, gap options, planning, books, parent concerns, gap news and news releases. Launched in October, 2007.

### **<http://www.teenlife.com>**

Provides informational resources that help families find meaningful experiential and educational opportunities for middle and high school students. The website features thousands of opportunities such as summer programs, gap and PG year programs, and high school semester/year abroad programs.

### **[www.studyoverseas.com](http://www.studyoverseas.com)**

Provides free advice for students worldwide who are considering studying abroad for an international education.

### **The American Gap Association** **[www.americangap.org](http://www.americangap.org)**

The American Gap Association is a new organization that is designed to both increase gap year participation and to accredit and set standards for gap year organizations marketing within the United States. This is a good resource for accredited programs. They also offer gap year news and tips on getting started. There is a parent and student link that is helpful in planning a gap year.

### **USA Gap Year Fairs** **[www.usagapyearfairs.org](http://www.usagapyearfairs.org)**

USA Gap Year Fairs is a national circuit of events that bring together reputable gap year organizations, interested students and parents, high school college counselors and the gap year experts. These events are designed to provide students with a broad exposure of gap year programs and the opportunity for face to face conversations with the people who work in the field. For students and parents interested in gap year, these fairs are the legitimate source to connect with reputable organizations that focus on Education, Service and Personal Growth.

# Post-High School Counseling Department

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[www.newtrier.k12.il.us/services/postHS/index.htm](http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/services/postHS/index.htm)

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**For more information and options please refer to the *College Alternatives* link on the New Trier Post-High School Counseling website.**



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