



Targeted Job Search Strategies

Gap Year and Short-Term Post Graduation Options

You may be most familiar with the term ‘gap year’ in reference to the time many students take between graduating from high school and college to travel, do additional coursework or programs, or work. Do you know that there are just as many – if not more – opportunities for taking a gap year (or two!) for recent college graduates? If you wish to explore various career paths and further build your career readiness competencies before heading back to school for a graduate or professional degree or starting a more long-term position, a gap year job is an ideal next step. This tip sheet describes some short-term opportunities that are a perfect way to gain valuable experience and help build your resume – all while earning an income. And, in some cases, these experiences will lead directly into full-time, long-term employment!

Applicable Career Communities:



As you begin to seriously consider some of the opportunities below, make sure you plan well in advance. Some opportunities such as Teach for America or Peace Corps are very selective and ask applicants to engage in extensive application processes that begin in the early fall of your senior year. Additionally, if you aspire to spend your gap year abroad, you will need plenty of time to prepare or update any travel documents, save money, or book travel in a timely fashion.

This list is not meant to be extensive, but to serve as a helpful starting point! A Career Coach in the ASC Center for Career and Professional Success can also help you determine what you want from a gap year, set goals, and break the exploration and application processes down into achievable action steps. You can schedule an appointment with a Career Coach by logging into Handshake.

Highly selective opportunities require a nomination from Ohio State. Two such competitive programs listed below are the James C. Gaither Junior Fellows program through the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Fulbright Grants. For more information and a robust list of similar fellowships across a range of academic disciplines and career interests, please visit the Ohio State Undergraduate Fellowship Office at: <https://honors-scholars.osu.edu/fellowship-office>

We’ve organized this tip sheet into five general sections, but please know that all of the opportunities included here will greatly enhance the development of career readiness competencies across all Career Communities.

Nonprofit and Social Services

AmeriCorps

<https://www.nationalservice.gov>
AmeriCorps places thousands of people into intensive service positions where they learn valuable skills, earn money for education, and develop a strong sense of civic responsibility. Three different tracks are offered:

AmeriCorps NCCC

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriCorps/ameriCorps-programs/ameriCorps-nccc>
A full-time, residential, team-based program for young adults to travel the country and complete hands-on projects. This program has two distinct service tracks: Traditional Corps and FEMA Corps.

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AmeriCorps State and National

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriCorps/ameriCorps-programs/ameriCorps-state-national>
A large network of programs that align with your interests, fit your schedule, and meet critical community needs across the country.

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America)

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriCorps/ameriCorps-programs/ameriCorps-vista>
A long-standing AmeriCorps program that sends members to communities facing poverty, inequality, and unemployment to build organizational, administrative, and financial capacity.

City Year Youth Service Corps

<http://www.cityyear.org>
City Year brings together diverse, talented teams of young adults to serve in high-need schools across the country, where they support students, teachers and schools all day, every day. City Year members build strong, “near-peer” relationships with students and provide academic and social-emotional support, while serving as essential resources to the school to boost student learning and achievement. Through their work in schools and communities, City Year members not only make a difference in the lives of students they serve, but also acquire valuable skills that prepare them to become the next generation of civically-engaged leaders.

Congressional Hunger Center Fellowship Programs

<https://www.hungercenter.org/fellowships/>
The Congressional Hunger Center seeks to develop a movement of anti-hunger leaders who are creating the political will necessary to end hunger and offers two unique leadership development programs:

The Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellows Program

<https://www.hungercenter.org/fellowships/emerson/>
A one-year leadership development program combining hands-on work in community-based organizations across the United States with policy-level experience in Washington, D.C.

The Mickey Leland International Hunger Fellows Program

<https://www.hungercenter.org/fellowships/leland/>
A two-year leadership development program where participants learn professional and leadership skills and build food and nutrition security around the world through programs and policy.

Peace Corps

<https://www.peacecorps.gov>
The Peace Corps is a service opportunity for motivated change makers to immerse themselves in a community abroad, working side by side with local leaders to tackle the most pressing challenges of our generation.

Public Allies AmeriCorps Ally Program

<https://publicallies.org/>
Publics Allies’ partnership with AmeriCorps dates back to its founding in 1994. Since then, the signature AmeriCorps Ally Program has identified thousands of diverse young adults and prepared them for leadership. Allies are placed with a nonprofit organization where they help address critical community needs such as youth development, education, workforce development, environmental issues, arts programming and community health. The AmeriCorps program is a dynamic pipeline for talented young people to emerge as leaders and to strengthen the capacity of community organizations.

Public Administration and Government

Capital Fellows Program

<https://www.csus.edu/calst/programs/>
The Center for California Studies is home to the Capital Fellows Programs, nationally-recognized fellowships in the California Assembly, Senate, executive agencies, and the judicial branch. Fellows perform professional work, receive mentorship, and participate in graduate level seminars. Many other states have similar programs! Be sure to do some research in your own home state if you are interested in taking part in such an opportunity closer to home.

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace James C. Gaither Junior Fellows Program

<https://carnegieendowment.org/about/jr-fellows>
Each year, through the James C. Gaither Junior Fellows program, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace offers approximately 12-14 one-year fellowships to uniquely qualified graduating seniors and individuals who have graduated during the past academic year. They are selected from a pool of nominees nominated by several hundred participating universities and colleges. James C. Gaither Junior Fellows work as research assistants to Carnegie’s senior scholars.

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City Hall Fellows

<http://cityhallfellows.org/about/>

City Hall Fellows works nationally to attract, grow, and retain a talented workforce to engage in the work of cities. They are a non-partisan, non-profit organization that believes local government is the most rewarding place to grow your career and positively impact communities.

Herbert Scoville Jr. Peace Fellowship program

<http://scoville.org/about/>

The Herbert Scoville Jr. Peace Fellowship was established in 1987 to provide college graduates with the opportunity to gain a Washington perspective on key issues of peace and security. Twice yearly, the fellowship's Board of Directors selects a small group of outstanding individuals to spend six to nine months in Washington. Supported by a salary, the fellows serve as full-time project assistants at the participating organization of their choice.

Ohio Legislative Service Commission Legislative Fellowship Program

<https://www.lsc.ohio.gov/pages/general/fellowship/legislativefellows.asp>

The Ohio General Assembly, through the Ohio Legislative Service Commission (LSC), has sponsored a legislative fellowship program for over 50 years. The LSC sponsors 20+ paid, thirteen-month legislative fellowship positions designed to provide college graduates with practical experience in the legislative process. This experience often leads to permanent employment opportunities in the legislature, state government, or related areas.

The Coro Fellowship in Public Affairs

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

The Coro Fellows Program develops emerging leaders to work and lead across different sectors by equipping them with knowledge, skills, and networks to accelerate positive change.

The Urban Fellows Program

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dcas/employment/urban-fellows.page>

The Urban Fellows Program is sponsored by The City of New York and administered by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). The Urban Fellows Program is a highly selective, nine-month fellowship that combines work in Mayoral offices and City agencies with volunteer service opportunities and a seminar series that explores current urban issues impacting public policy. The program is designed to introduce a diverse group

of America's finest college students and graduates to local government and public service. Program participants come from all over the country to work in New York City.

Education

ArtistYear

<https://artistyear.org/>

ArtistYear is the first national AmeriCorps program for artists to dedicate themselves to a year of service to our country. ArtistYear's mission is to ensure every underserved student in America has arts education through a national service arts corps, by developing supporting, and placing recent higher-education arts graduates across disciplines at low-income schools as dedicated teaching artists.

Fulbright U.S. Student Program

<http://us.fulbrightonline.org>

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program offers research, study, and teaching opportunities in over 140 countries to recent graduates and graduate students.

I Know I Can (IKIC) AmeriCorps Ohio College Guide Program

<https://iknowican.org/contact/employment/>

The IKIC AmeriCorps Ohio College Guides program places recent college graduates in middle schools and high schools to serve as mentors and advisors to Columbus City Schools and South-Western City Schools students as they get ready for, get in and get through their postsecondary pursuits. IKIC is just one of many Ohio College Guides programs. See <https://www.collegenowgc.org/ohio-ameriCorps/> for information on which Ohio cities have similar programs.

Japanese Exchange and Teaching Program (JET)

<https://jetprogramusa.org/>

Founded in 1987, JET has sent more than 66,000 participants from around the globe (including nearly 34,000 Americans) to work in schools, boards of education, and government offices throughout Japan. What makes JET unique is that it is the only teaching exchange program managed by the government of Japan. With more than 40 countries around the world participating in JET, this program offers a unique cultural exchange opportunity to meet people from all around the world who are living and working in Japan.

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KIPP Columbus Inspire Teaching Fellowship

<https://www.kippcolumbus.org/join-our-team/fellows-program/>

Through a three-year commitment to KIPP Columbus, INSPIRE Teaching Fellows spend their first year training in a mentor’s classroom and receiving specific professional development opportunities. Upon successful completion of the program, Fellows are considered for a full time teaching position with KIPP Columbus.

Teach for America

<https://www.teachforamerica.org>

Teach for America finds outstanding leaders who commit to expanding educational opportunity, beginning with at least two years teaching in an under-resourced public school. Working shoulder-to-shoulder with students, educators, and community members, corps members go beyond traditional expectations to support the academic and personal growth of their students.

Teach Kentucky

<https://www.teachkentucky.com/>

Teach Kentucky is a selective teacher recruitment program seeking to attract motivated college graduates to teach in Kentucky’s public schools. Based in Louisville - a vibrant, forward-thinking city with a rich history - Teach Kentucky places the majority of its teachers within that metropolitan area.

Environmental

Green Corps

<https://greencorps.org//>

Green Corps is the country’s most respected training program for environmental organizers, with nearly 400 of graduates at work today on the most urgent environmental issues of our time. If you’re passionate about the environment and ready to learn and practice the craft of organizing, this year-long program is the best place to start.

National Association of Service and Conservation Corps

<https://corpsnetwork.org/>

Corps are locally-based organizations that engage young adults (generally ages 16 – 25) and veterans

(up to age 35) in service projects addressing recreation, conservation, disaster response, and community needs. Through a term of service that could last from a few months to a year, Corps participants – or “Corpsmembers” – gain work experience and develop in-demand skills.

Corpsmembers are compensated with a stipend or living allowance and often receive an education award or scholarship upon completing their term of service. Additionally, participants are offered educational programming, mentoring, and access to career and personal counseling.

Student Conservation Association (SCA) Young Adult Programs

<https://www.thesca.org/serve/young-adult-programs>

Are you a college student or recent graduate age 18 or over with a passion for the environment? Are you ready to travel to new places and take on new challenges? Whether your dream is to lead public programs as a park ranger, trek the backcountry as a field scientist, or explore new sustainability solutions as an urban planner, SCA has something for you.

WorldWide Opportunities on Organic Farms

<http://wwwoof.net/>

Want to live and learn on organic farms worldwide? Want to share your life with other like-minded people? WWOOF is a worldwide movement linking volunteers with organic farmers and growers to promote cultural and educational experiences based on trust and non-monetary exchange, thereby helping to build a sustainable, global community. As a volunteer (or WWOOFer!) you will live alongside your host helping with daily tasks and experiencing life as a farmer.

Entrepreneurship

Venture for America

<https://ventureforamerica.org/>

VFA is a two-year fellowship program for recent grads who want to work at a startup and create jobs in American cities. Fellows learn important startup skills at our month-long Training Camp, apply for jobs within our vetted company network, and work for two years as full-time, salaried employees in one of 14 cities.

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