

GAP YEAR/POST-COLLEGE SERVICE EXPERIENCES

A gap year is intentionally taking time off before starting graduate school or entering your career to pursue a short-term opportunity. Also called post-college service or post-graduate volunteering, these opportunities provide time for traveling, volunteering, learning a new language, or experiencing any number of other activities for personal growth. These positions typically require between a three month and three year commitment.

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER THIS OPTION?

Preparing students for responsible living and meaningful work is part of the mission of The College of St. Scholastica. Gap year experiences are a perfect way to put the language of our mission into action.

Additional benefits include:

- Living out the Catholic Benedictine call to service and community
- Examining interests and developing skills before you enter your career or graduate school
- Exploring the country and world
- Meeting new people and connecting with future career contacts
- Learning about your skills and interests through hands-on work
- Walk with those in need and come to a better understanding of the world around you
- Build communication, organizational, networking and team skills

WHAT WOULD I DO?

- These opportunities exist in numerous settings: health, arts, sciences, environment, education and social action.
- Activities generally take place with nonprofit institutions such as schools, hospitals or foundations.
- Placements are all over the U.S., in other countries and include different faith traditions as well as secular organizations.
- Potential work includes preventing water supply contamination, mentoring and educating youth, working for prevention, treatment or cure for specific diseases, organizing voter registration, or fighting for relief and support for the poor or disadvantaged.

HOW CAN I AFFORD THIS?

- Many opportunities will provide room or board, or a combination of the two.
- Often the organization will also provide a financial stipend for basic living expenses.
- Some sites provide basic health insurance and in many cases you may also be able to defer your loans so repayment does not begin until after the service is complete.

WHAT IS MY NEXT STEP?

- Attend the Volunteer Fair held each fall on campus – watch for details.
- Visit our website at css.edu/career and research resources on the Volunteer page.
- Visit specific organization websites or general volunteer websites including: idealist.org, americorps.gov, CNVS.org, peacecorps.gov, teachforamerica.org, jesuitvolunteers.org, and lutheranvolunteercorps.org.