



Gap Year Opportunities

Are you considering taking a gap year? How do you know this is the best path for you? If you are asking yourself these questions, it's important to consider the typical reasons why many University of Chicago students decide to take a gap year or two upon graduation. These include:

- Gaining more direct clinical experience
- Advancing research skills
- Exploring another side of health and medicine to further your career exploration
- Dedicating more time to preparing for the application (and the MCAT)
- Gaining an extra year to take advanced courses and focus on your cumulative and science GPA
- Considering study abroad for longer than a quarter (or outside the recommended timeframe)
- Recharging your batteries – it's okay to take a break!
- Strengthening and building relationships for stronger letters of recommendations
- Prioritizing your finances – medical school is expensive!

A gap year is also an opportunity for you to explore something that you may not have the opportunity to do as an undergraduate or as a graduate student. It can truly be an amazing opportunity that often helps shape your future career and define your “why medicine” on your professional school application. Professional schools like to see applicants who can demonstrate that they possess a variety of real world skills and experiences. If you are looking for something to do in between undergrad and medical school, dental school, vet school, graduate school, etc. you should consider looking into some of the opportunities listed below.

The Careers in Healthcare team is here to help you feel confident about your career path, consider [scheduling an appointment](#) to discuss if a gap year is right for you and/or what type of opportunities are a good fit. Please also sign up for the Careers in Healthcare newsletter [here](#) to stay updated on live gap year opportunities and email any questions to cih@uchicago.edu.

Here is a sampling (not an exhaustive list!) of gap year opportunities broken down by Type of opportunity:

CLINICAL OPPORTUNITIES

Church Health Center Internship Program

Link: <https://churchhealth.org/internship-opportunities/>

Description: Dr. Scott Morris founded the Church Health Center in 1987 to provide quality, affordable healthcare for working, uninsured people and their families. Over the years, Dr. Morris has hired pre-medical students in their gap year to intern in what has become the country's largest faith-based clinic.

Duration: 3 months-1 year

Internship/Co-Ops for Pre-Medical Students

Link: <http://people.rit.edu/gtfsbi/Symp/premed.htm>

Description: List of internship postings compiled by Rochester Institute of Technology for pre-medical students.

Duration: Summer

Department of Veterans Affairs

Link: <http://www.va.gov/>

Description: The VA's goal is to provide excellence to the over 25 million veterans currently alive in patient care, veterans benefits, and customer satisfaction. There are numerous opportunities to volunteer or be employed with the

Department of Veterans Affairs in the health care setting or in other settings relating to the care of our country's veterans.

National Institute of Health Science/Clinical Internships and Research Training Opportunities

Link: <https://www.cc.nih.gov/training/gme1.html>

Description: Numerous job and internship opportunities available at all levels in various fields of science

Project Horseshoe Farm

Link: <https://www.projecthsf.org/internships>

Description: In communities across our nation, countless healthcare providers, teachers, and other community leaders are fighting hard on behalf of the people they serve. To help them in this fight, Horseshoe Farm is bringing additional relationship-based support as part of an integrated new approach to community health. We do this through a pioneering paid “gap year” Fellowship which is mobilizing a generation of top recent college graduates who offer needed local support to health systems, schools, and community organizations as they learn to become leaders in community health. At sites in Alabama and California, PHF fellows shadow medical clinics, manage Enhanced Independent Housing Programs, run Community Center and educational Youth Programs, and work one-on-one with Health Partners to assist them in reaching their health goals.

Note: Stipend and housing provided.

Duration: 13 months, with an opportunity to extend for a 2nd year.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Fulbright Program for U.S Students

Link: <http://us.fulbrightonline.org/about/fulbright-us-student-program>

Description: Applicants design their own programs, which may include: University coursework, Independent research, Professional training in the arts and other fields or a combination of these or other projects.

Reqs: Attendance at orientation programs

Duration: Academic year in length—between 9 and 12 months

Graduate Research, Education, and Training (GREAT) Group

Link: <https://www.aamc.org/members/great/>

Description: The GREAT Group is an AAMC Group established quality education in the biomedical sciences. They have a link to Summer Undergraduate Research Programs (by school) at their website.

Duration: Summer

Health Communications Internship Program

Link: <https://hcup.nci.nih.gov/>

Description: The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is the Federal Government's principal agency for cancer research and training. The NCI coordinates the National Cancer Program, which conducts and supports research, training, health information dissemination, and other programs with respect to the cause, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of cancer, rehabilitation from cancer, and the continuing care of cancer patients and the families of cancer patients.

Duration: 6 months- 1 year

Health Sciences Research Opportunities

Link: <https://www.swarthmore.edu/health-sciences-office/summer-opportunities>

Description: This website from Swarthmore College provides a list of links to summer research programs available to undergrads and recent grads in the U.S.

National Institute of Health, Clinical Center, Bioethics Fellow

Link: <http://www.bioethics.nih.gov/education/index.shtml>

Description: Fellows participate in bioethics seminars, case conferences, ethics consultation, review of research protocols and IRB deliberations, and have access to multiple educational opportunities at the NIH. Fellows conduct theoretical and empirical research in the ethics of health policy, international research ethics, and human subject research. For a typical fellow this research yields multiple publications in academic journals. Post-baccalaureate (those graduating in the spring, as well as a few years past graduation) or post-doctoral are eligible.

Duration: 1-2 years

New York Health Research Training Program (H RTP)

Link: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/about/employment/hrtp-internship.page>

Description: The Health Research Training Program (H RTP) of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene provides undergraduate, graduate/professional school students the opportunity to experience some of the "real life" challenges of public health. By working on current relevant public health issues under the close supervision of experienced professionals, students apply their classroom learning to practical problems and, in the process, learn critical skills.

Pfizer Lab Internships (Summer)

Link: <http://www.pfizer.com/careers/>

Description: Pfizer, the world's largest research-based pharmaceutical company is offering several laboratory internships in fields of chemistry, microbiology, and physical sciences.

Duration: Summer

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

AYUDA Internship (unpaid)

Link: <https://www.ayudavolunteer.org/programs>

Description: American Youth Understanding Diabetes Abroad, Inc. (AYUDA) is a grassroots organization seeking interns who are dedicated, hardworking and self-motivated. The interns will experience how a small non-profit organization works from the everyday operations to the delivery of essential medical support and resources to Latin America.

Duration: Summer

American Cancer Society Internships

Link: <https://www.cancer.org/about-us/employment-opportunities.html>

Description: The internship program at the American Cancer Society provides an opportunity for people to make a difference as they gain valuable hands-on experience in the non-profit sector and a greater understanding of the Society's mission.

Duration: 8-week rotations available year round

AmeriCorps

Link: <https://americorps.gov/about/careers>

Description: AmeriCorps State and National provides funds to local and national organizations and agencies committed to using national service to address critical community needs in education, public safety, health and environment. There are numerous individual organizations that, as AmeriCorps member organizations, hire one or more Corps members each year. Search the website to find more information about becoming a Corps member with a participating Americorps organization. Open to recent graduates. Note: stipend and benefits available.

Duration: 1-2 years.

AmeriCorps State and National

The largest of AmeriCorps programs, AmeriCorps State and National provides funds to local and national organizations and agencies committed to using national service to address critical community needs in education, public safety, health and the environment. Members serve full- or part-time over a 9- to 12-month period.

AmeriCorps NCCC

AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) is a full-time, team-based residential program for men and women age 18–24. Members live on one of five campuses, located in Denver, Colorado; Sacramento, California; Perry Point, Maryland; Vicksburg, MS; and Vinton, Iowa. AmeriCorps NCCC requires an intensive 10-month commitment.

AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA is the national service program designed specifically to fight poverty. VISTA members commit to serve full-time for a year at a nonprofit organization or local government agency, working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, strengthen community groups, and much more.

City Year

Link: <http://www.cityyear.org>

Description: City Year corps member serve full-time as tutors and mentors in schools, running after-school programs, leading and developing youth leadership programs, and vacation camps to make a difference in the lives of children and their communities.

Duration: 1 year

Citizen School (2 years)

Link: <http://www.citizenschools.org/>

Description: The Citizen Schools National Teaching Fellowship is a service program offering a two-year, leadership development experience, including service as a team leader at a Citizen Schools campus, professional development with a partner organization in the community, and the opportunity for optional enrollment in a pioneering Master's program in out-of-school learning.

Duration: 2 years

Community HealthCorps

Link: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/tags-tags/community-healthcorps>

Description: Community HealthCorps is the largest health-focused, national AmeriCorps program that promotes health care for America's underserved, while developing tomorrow's health care workforce. The mission is to improve health care access and enhance workforce development through community health center sponsored AmeriCorps including VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), and related programs. Approximately 800 Community HealthCorps members serve in 47 partner organizations and 4 affiliate organizations at over 150 delivery sites across 19 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Focused on direct services, HealthCorps members provide a variety of health services/programs for patients and community by serving as community health workers (CHWs). Focused on indirect services, HealthCorps*VISTA members work to alleviate poverty by improving the capacity of health centers to provide quality health services and programs to medically underserved people.

Knowles Science Teaching Fellowship

Link: <https://knowlesteachers.org/teaching-fellowship/teaching-fellows-program>

Description: Each year, KSTF awards Teaching Fellowships to exceptional young men and women committed to teaching science and mathematics in United States high schools. The Teaching Fellowship is designed explicitly to meet the needs of teachers from the time they begin working on a teaching credential through the early years of their career. One of the criteria KSTF uses to select new fellows and evaluate current fellows is commitment to teaching. The fellowship is designed for individuals who recognize teaching as an intellectually demanding profession and are committed to being leaders and change

agents in education. By contrast, the KSTF Teaching Fellowship is not intended for individuals who are pursuing teaching as a way to strengthen a resume, take a break from another career or remain employed while seeking other work in other fields.

Duration: 2+ years.

Public Allies

Link: <http://publicallies.org/ally-application/>

Description: Through the AmeriCorps program, Public Allies identifies talented young adults from diverse backgrounds and advances their leadership through a ten-month program of full-time, paid apprenticeships in nonprofit organizations, weekly leadership trainings, and team service projects. Allies commit to full-time paid apprenticeships in nonprofit organizations in their communities where they: serve four days per week, create, improve and expand services that address diverse issues, including youth development, education, public health, economic development and the environment, earn a monthly stipend of \$1,300 to \$1,800, and receive healthcare, childcare, student loan deferment and a post-service education award of \$4,725. Allies also have a rigorous leadership development curriculum delivered by community leaders, practitioners and educators, which includes: intensive weekly skill training and leadership development seminars, critical feedback, reflection, and personal coaching toward individual performance and professional goals, community building and team projects with a diverse cohort of peers, and presentations of learning at the end of the year to demonstrate how one met the learning outcomes of the program.

Reqs: Recent graduate

Duration: 6 months – 1 year

Reach the World Classroom Internship

Link: <http://www.internships.com/posting/global-classroom-intern>

Description: Reach the World is seeking motivated individuals who want to gain classroom experience and help teachers empower the young minds of Chicago Public School students.

Teach for America

Link: <http://www.teachforamerica.org>

Description: Teach For America aims to end educational inequity. TFA corps members serve in high-need schools for a commitment of at least two years.

Duration: 2 years

U.S. Schweitzer Fellows Programs

Link: <http://www.schweitzerfellowship.org>

Description: The U.S. Schweitzer Fellows Programs provide community service fellowships for graduate students in health related professional fields who are dedicated to addressing unmet health needs in their local areas.

Duration: 1 year

PUBLIC HEALTH AND POLICY OPPORTUNITIES

Alliance for Health Reform

Link: <https://www.allhealthpolicy.org/internships/>

Description: The Alliance for Health Reform is seeking interns focusing on health policy research and media relations. Interns at the Alliance serve as front-line troops for our media outreach and educational efforts. Interns have a variety of responsibilities including: research, health policy analysis, media list compilation, administrative duties, and web page updates. Interns attend events and forums on Capitol Hill and in the D.C. area. Interns help with seminar logistics, perform research on all aspects of health reform, and carry out general administrative duties. Interns receive a thorough education in health care economics and politics, the roots of the problems with our health care system, and the various proposed reform strategies. They work closely with experienced policy professionals, congressional staffers, administrators, journalists, and other members of the policy community. The hands-on experience interns receive is often that sought by legislative staffs, government affairs offices, and other advocacy and policy groups.

American Public Health Association Internships

Link: <https://www.apha.org/professional-development/apha-internships-and-fellowships>

Description: The American Public Health Association is the oldest, largest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world and has been working to improve public health since 1872. A variety of internships for undergrad and grad students are available.

Duration: 3 months-1 year

CDC Emerging Leaders Program

Link: <https://www.cdc.gov/fellowships/full-time/index.html>

Description: Comprehensive, two year, full time employment and career development program that is a stepping stone to careers in science, technology, public health, administration and more. Upon successful completion of the program, participants are eligible for permanent placement in an HHS operating bureau.

Reqs: College graduate

Health Career Connection (HCC) Fellowship

Link: <https://www.healthcareers.org/internship-program/>

Description: HCC offers a comprehensive paid summer internship program for talented, diverse undergraduate students and recent college graduates that provides them with invaluable experience, exposure, mentoring, training, and networking to pursue health careers.

Health Resources and Services Administration Public Health Internship

Link: <https://www.hrsa.gov/hr/intern-program.html>

Description: Public health internship with a federal agency in Washington D.C., HRSA. Interns will complete a one semester rotation within one of HRSA's Bureaus. HRSA internship is an unfunded practicum experience for graduate and undergraduate students in good standing at schools of public health and public health programs in the U.S. Duties include grant support and management, public health seminar participation, plan and coordination of meetings of public health experts/practitioners, shadowing HRSA staff, etc.

MHealthy Intern

Link: <https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health-well-being/mhealthy/more-mhealthy/contact-mhealthy/internships-temporary-employment>

Description: MHealthy has internship possibilities for currently enrolled and recent college students in the areas of fitness center management, corporate health promotion, health education, community health promotion, nutrition, tobacco cessation, employee wellness, and marketing.

Duration: Summer or Semester

NIH Administrative Fellows Program

Link: <https://hr.nih.gov/training-center/programs/intern/intern-fellow-programs>

Description: The AFP provides the opportunity for the NIH to bring new and excited employees into its administrative community. Program includes mentorship, an individual training plan, a 90 day rotation, a camaraderie of current Fellows, an annual AFP Symposium, and opportunities to make a difference at the NIH in one of eight target positions. Individual positions include administrative officers, budget analysts, ethics specialists, grants management specialists, health communications, and management analysts.

Reqs: Must be a U.S. citizen, must be able to qualify at the GS-9 level, must attend a recruitment event or have spoken with an NIH recruiter prior to closing date.

National Institute of Health Student Programs

Link: <https://www.training.nih.gov/programs/sip>

Description: The NIH provides a plethora of opportunities for students at all levels

Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities- Various Fellowships

Link: <https://www.cdc.gov/minorityhealth/internships.html>

Description: The OMHD supports training opportunities for qualified students at all levels of their education. Many of the opportunities involve working with the Federal Government or the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

Partners in Health Internships

Link: <https://www.pih.org/pages/employment>

Description: Partners in Health is a foundation that strive to cultivate a concerted movement of people and communities dedicated to fighting poverty, social injustices and health inequities. All internships through PIH are unpaid.

Available internships include:

- PIH Institute for Health and Social Justice Summer Internship Program
- Independent research projects
- Physicians for Haiti
- Nyaya Health
- FACE AIDS
- Global Health Corps Fellows
- Children's Hospital Boston Global Pediatric Fellowship

Presidential Management Fellows Program

Link: <https://www.pmf.gov/become-a-pmf/overview.aspx>

Description: The purpose of the Program is to attract to the Federal service outstanding men and women from a variety of academic disciplines and career paths who have a clear interest in, and commitment to, excellence in the leadership and management of public policies and programs.

Duration: 1 year

U.S. Public Health Service Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program

Link: <https://www.usphs.gov/students/>

Description: JRCOSTEP participants serve in assignments throughout the country during their official school breaks for periods from 31 to 120 days. Although opportunities can be offered throughout the year, most JRCOSTEP participants are hired for the summer months (June, July, and August). JRCOSTEP participants work in the various operating divisions (OPDIVs) that make up the health agencies with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). They also may work in other OPDIVs within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or certain other Federal agencies. For more information, see program FAQ on website. JRCOSTEP participants do not have an obligation to serve in the PHS Commissioned Corps after graduation. However, upon completing his/her professional education, the student may serve an extended active-duty assignment with any of the Agencies/Operating Divisions (OPDIVs)/Programs that accept PHS commissioned officers for assignment.

UCLA School of Public Health Visiting Scholars Program

Link: https://hpm.ph.ucla.edu/pages/visiting_scholars

Description: A program for individuals who are interested in learning more about public health issues without participating in a formal degree program. Participants may sit in on classes, work with faculty and have access to campus and department resources. A certificate of participation is awarded upon completion of the program. \$9,000 fee per year.

Duration: One academic year

United Nations Foundation

Link: <https://unfoundation.org/careers/internship-opportunities/>

Description: We offer semester-long full and part-time internships during the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms for undergraduates, graduate students, and recent graduates. Our interns participate in a variety of activities and perform a variety of tasks in support of the department for which they work. The number and nature of internships depends on the needs of the

various departments. Applicants should be enrolled in a degree-granting program in an undergraduate or graduate school during the internship, or should be a recent graduate with a demonstrated interest in the UN and international development.

INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

AIESEC

Link: <https://aiesec.org/>

Description: AIESEC is a global, non-political, independent, not-for-profit organization run by students and recent graduates. Its members are interested in world issues, leadership and management. AIESEC provides its members with an integrated development experience comprised of leadership opportunities, international internships and participation in a global learning environment.

BUNAC

Link: <http://www.bunac.org/>

Description: BUNAC offers a range of work abroad, volunteer abroad, and teaching overseas programs to destinations such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Cambodia, South Africa, Ghana, China, and Peru.

ChildVoice International

Link: <http://www.childvoiceintl.org>

Description: ChildVoice International is quickly expanding in northern Uganda. Opportunities include, but are not limited to, adult and child education, psycho-social rehabilitation, community health, spiritual leadership and development, income generating projects, microfinance, art, physical and occupational therapy, administrative and organizational tasks, and agriculture.

Duration: 10-12 weeks in the spring, summer, and fall

Comparative Health Care Program in Japan

Link: <http://jcmu.isp.msu.edu/students/getting-started/>

Description: The Comparative Health Care in Japan Program is an opportunity designed for health care, pre-med, and nursing students who want to add international dimensions to their careers at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. JCMU partners with the Shiga University of Medical Sciences (SUMS) for this program, allowing JCMU students to work alongside with graduate students, researchers and professors.

Duration: Summer

Emerging Leaders Program

Link: <https://humancapital.learning.hhs.gov/elp.asp>

Description: The Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) is a competitive, two-year, paid, federal internship with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The program provides a unique opportunity to develop analytical and critical leadership skills in one of the largest federal agencies in the nation.

Duration: 2 years

Global Health and Education Initiative

Link: <http://www.ghei.org/work-with-us>

Description: Various gap year(s) opportunities. Check periodically.

Global Healing HEAL Internship

Link: <https://rvpc.globalhealing.org/volunteer/heal/>

Description: Health Education & Advocacy Liaisons (HEAL) internships give undergraduate and medical students the chance to work with physicians at the Roatan Volunteer Pediatric Clinic (RVPC) in Honduras.

Duration: 1 to 3 months

Peace Corps

Link: <http://www.peacecorps.gov/>

Description: Peace Corps Volunteers serve in 74 countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America, Europe, and the Middle East. Collaborating with local community members, volunteers work in areas like education, youth outreach and community development, health, and information technology.

Duration: 2 years

Unite for Sight

Link: <http://www.uniteforsight.org/volunteer-abroad/program-requirements>

Description: A hands-on, immersive global health volunteer experience.

