Gap Year Opportunities

Have you ever considered taking a gap year? Many University of Chicago students who plan to apply to health professions schools decide to take a gap year upon graduation to gain more direct clinical experience, advance their research skills, or explore another side of health and medicine by working with people either by teaching, community organizing, or participating in public health initiatives or health policy. A gap year is 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. 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. These opportunities range in duration from a few weeks, to a summer, to a year, to even a couple of years. If you are considering going abroad or committing to more than one gap year, it is important to speak with your pre-health advisor about the best timeline for you to apply for schools in.

Please note that this list is a sampling of the opportunities that are available to you for a gap year. If you would like to explore additional resources or to discuss more about what you may be interested in doing upon graduation before entering a graduate or professional program, you may want to consider scheduling an appointment with UChicago Careers in Health Professions (UCIHP) through Inspire. Please email ucihp@uchicago.edu if you have any questions.

**AIESEC**

**Link:** http://www.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.

**Alliance for Health Reform**

**Link:** http://www.allhealth.org/aboutus_internships.asp

**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 Cancer Society Internships**

**Link:** http://www.cancer.org/docroot/emp/content/EMP_1_Internships.asp

**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
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

AmeriCorps
Link: http://www.americorps.gov/
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.

AYUDA Internship
Link: http://www.ayudainc.net/index.php/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

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.

CDC Emerging Leaders Program
Link: http://hhsu.learning.hhs.gov/elp/
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
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

Church Health Center Internship Program
Link: https://churchhealth.org/interns/
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

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.

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
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.

Emerging Leaders Program (2 years)
Link: http://hhsu.learning.hhs.gov/elp/
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 Healing HEAL Internship
Link: http://www.internabroad.com/listingsp3.cfm/listing/48943
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

Global Health and Education Initiative
Link: http://www.ghei.org/work-with-us
Description: Various gap year(s) opportunities. Check periodically.

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 Career Connection (HCC) Fellowship
Link: https://www.healthcareers.org/internship-overview/
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 Communications Internship Program
Link: https://hcip.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 Resources and Services Administration Public Health Internship
Link: http://www.hrsa.gov/about/jobs/internprogram.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.

**Health Sciences Research Opportunities**
**Link:** [http://www.swarthmore.edu/x8853.xml](http://www.swarthmore.edu/x8853.xml)
**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.

**Internship/Co-Ops for Pre-Medical Students**
**Link:** [http://people.rit.edu/gtfsbi/Symp/premed.htm](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

**Knowles Science Teaching Fellowship**
**Link:** [https://knowlesteachers.org/teaching-fellowship/teaching-fellows-program](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.

**MHealthy Intern**
**Link:** [https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health-well-being/mhealthy/mmore-mhealthy/contact-mhealthy/internships-temporary-employment](https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health-well-being/mhealthy/mmore-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](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 Science/Clinical Internships and Research Training Opportunities**
**Link:** [https://www.cc.nih.gov/training/gme1.html](https://www.cc.nih.gov/training/gme1.html)
**Description:** Numerous job and internship opportunities available at all levels in various fields of science

**National Institute of Health, Clinical Center, Bioethics Fellow**
**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 (HRTP)**
*Link:* [https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/about/employment/hrtp-internship.page](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/about/employment/hrtp-internship.page)
*Description:* The Health Research Training Program (HRTP) 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.

**Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities- Various Fellowships**
*Link:* [https://www.cdc.gov/minorityhealth/internships.html](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**
*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

**Peace Corps**
*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

**Pfizer Lab Internships (Summer)**
*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

**Presidential Management Fellows Program**
*Link:* [https://www.pmf.gov/become-a-pmf/overview.aspx](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
Project Horseshoe Farm
Link: https://www.projecthsf.org/
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.

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.

Research Associates Program at St. Vincent's Medical Center (Summer)
Link: http://www.raprogram.org/
Description: The Dept. of Emergency Medicine at St. Vincent's Medical Center recruits college students and graduates to join research efforts in the emergency department (ED). With both the research and service protocols, each RA will have direct interactions with well over 100 patients and visitors during the summer semester.

Sowing Seeds for Change Fellowship
Link: http://saf-unite.org/content/sowing-seeds-change-fellowship
Description: The Sowing Seeds for Change Fellowship is a 6 month leadership development program for college students and recent graduates to improve farmworkers’ access to healthcare as well as advocate for improved living and working conditions. Fellows work directly with rural health clinics in North Carolina, providing health education, case management, and interpretation for farmworkers.
Duration: 6 months – 1 year

Student Programs at the National Institute of Health
Link: https://www.training.nih.gov/programs/sip
Description: The NIH provides a plethora of opportunities for students at all levels
**Teach for America**
*Link:* [http://www.teachforamerica.org](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

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**UCLA School of Public Health Visiting Scholars Program**
*Link:* [https://hpm.ph.ucla.edu/pages/visiting_scholars](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

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**United Nations Foundation**
*Link:* [http://www.unfoundation.org/who-we-are/careers/](http://www.unfoundation.org/who-we-are/careers/)

*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.

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**Unite for Sight**
*Link:* [http://www.uniteforsight.org/volunteer-abroad/program-requirements](http://www.uniteforsight.org/volunteer-abroad/program-requirements)

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

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

*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.

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**U.S. Schweitzer Fellows Programs**
*Link:* [http://www.schweitzerfellowship.org](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