

2016 Gap Year Opportunities

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During junior and senior years, high school students begin to think about their future. Many may feel overwhelmed in deciding where they should go to college, what they should study, what they should do in their future career, and so on. Have you ever considered the benefits that come with taking a year off before entering college? Even taking a gap year in the middle of college can make you a better student, more prepared, and more intentional. Joining a service program for a year can give you a deeper understanding of yourself while you give your time in service to others.

Below are a few options available to young adults. The FFWPU National Youth Ministry will host a webinar this month to share information and testimonies with interested parents and students. Check back soon for details!



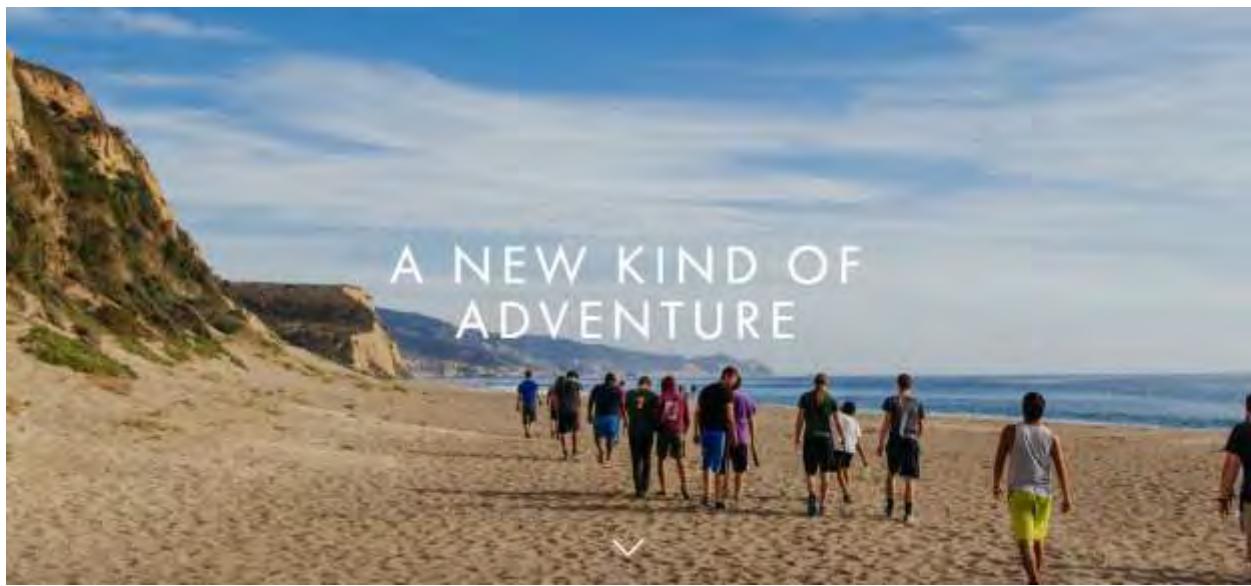
Generation Peace Academy (GPA)

GPA's motto is "Generation Peace Academy, creating a path to lead a meaningful life with God, True Parents and each other." This one-year program is for anyone seeking to understand who they are as a Unificationist-born young person. GPA is a good place to be. By going through the program with its different components of workshops, international service, adventure training, pilgrimage and more, participants are challenged and develop a greater understanding and appreciation of our movement's deep roots, their parents' lives, and the significance of True Parents.

The three outcomes of the GPA year are 1) developing a lasting, personal relationship with God and True Parents, 2) understanding, practicing and sharing the Divine Principle, and 3) being empowered to uniquely impact the world.

One of the inevitable results of one (or two) years on GPA is creating strong bonds with dozens of other brothers and sisters who become friends of faith who share the same values and aspirations.

For more information, go to www.generationpeaceacademy.org, visit the Facebook page, or contact the director, Roland Platt (rolandgpa@gmail.com) or the administrator, Jan Pearson (janjp.gpa@gmail.com).



NextGen Academy (NGA)

The NextGen Academy was created to inspire and develop a new generation of leaders, who not only can create progressive change in their communities but also can embody the principles of compassion, altruism and love. Through a rigorous training and leadership development curriculum and by designing and implementing autonomous service projects, participants develop the skills and capabilities to deliver their own unique contributions to the betterment of society—all while having fun!

Everything NGA does has two guiding principles. The first is the impact to the communities they serve. NGA serves both domestically and abroad by creating a sustainable difference through education programs, community projects and partnerships with local businesses.

The second is the impact to participants. The program includes a number of workshops and leadership development exercises to help participants dig deep within themselves and find new sources of strength and internal fortitude, develop stronger bonds of communication and connection, and gain the practical and technical skills of project development and delivery. As the year progresses, participants take on leadership roles within the program, coordinating their own workshops, developing unique anti-bullying campaigns, and designing and implementing their own international service projects. Impassioned with a desire to serve others, many of our alumni continue beyond the program to create sustainable impact in communities and pursue improvements in health, social empowerment and education.

For more information visit their website or Facebook page. Contact nga.admissions@gmail.com for more details.



DONE

The Europe-based training program DONE (Development of New Environment) is designed for Unificationist-born young people over 18 years old who are interested in participating in spiritual training and education. The education focuses on developing character, strengthening one's life of faith, and deepening one's relationship with God, True Parents and brothers and sisters. The program is open to those who have just graduated from high school as well as young adults who wish to take time for their spiritual education at a later stage in life.

DONE 2016 will be organized, guided and managed by the European Second Generation Department (ESGD) staff team. The program comprises three modules, each of which can serve as a 3-month training program or be combined into a 1-year program. It includes an educational period, fundraising training periods, service projects and other educational and bonding experiences as brothers and sisters. It offers participants down-to-earth education and care in building their relationship to God and furthering their understanding of life. Through the varied schedule and opportunities, young Unificationists are given the chance to make their spiritual life and knowledge lasting and real, as well as to create strong bonds of friendship and learn useful skills and wisdom for life.

Their mission states: "We believe that [Unificationist-born young people] need to have a healthy understanding of who they are, seeing their potential and role in taking a lead to develop new environments wherever they go and whatever they do. In line with this, DONE aims to provide participants with the opportunity to strengthen their confidence and maturity so that they can believe they can make a positive difference in this world."

For more information, visit the ESGD website or its Facebook page. Contact DONE staff member Patrick Hanna (done.europe@gmail.com).



Become a Staff Member at GOP

GOP (General Orientation Program) is designed for young Unificationists (usually 13 to 15 years old in the first year) to be able to learn Korean language and Korean culture by studying in Seoul for a year or more. In addition, the program is always interested in Unificationist-born young adults to be junior staff. It is preferred that they are 21 years of age or older, but younger is also possible. This is a great opportunity to grow your heart and learn what it's like to be a parent. Raising teenagers isn't easy, but seeing them grow is very valuable.

To learn more, visit the GOP website. Contact Olaleye Alao (gopdorm1@gmail.com) for more information.



Cheong Pyeong 40-Day Workshops

Chung Pyung is a holy place designated by True Parents as a “restored Garden of Eden” and an “original hometown” where visitors from around the world can naturally experience God. Many testify that it provides a sacred environment unlike any other, conducive to personal transformation both physically and spiritually. Simply the decision to journey to Chung Pyung is an investment in one’s life of faith. It’s a chance to connect with God and True Parents and to find one’s true self.

Chung Pyung provides the space to have a breakthrough in finding one’s true self, the person God created us to be. You’ll find that reading God’s word and sincere prayer are more effective there than back at home where there are plenty of distractions. You’ll also be able to join others in their spiritual journey and make true, lasting friendships. Experience Korea, the Fatherland.

For more information, contact Sachika Hayashi (cpint2013@gmail.com) or visit the Chung Pyung website.



European STF

STF (Special Task Force) is a one-year Europe-based program for young Unificationists (age 18-25) who have the desire to dedicate some time of their youth to God and True Parents, to find out more about themselves and their character, and to deepen their understanding of our movement by putting Divine Principle into action. It is also a great opportunity to bond deeply with each other and to build relationships that can last.

The year includes some experience of fundraising, witnessing, many workshops (including an Original Divine Principle, or ODP, workshop and a Blessing education workshop), a trip to Korea and service projects. During the year there is also a parents’ workshop (around Easter) which is a chance for parents of the participants to reunite with their children for a few days. The headquarters of STF is currently in Austria, and through the year the participants have the chance to visit different countries in Europe while doing mission work. Through the experience of fundraising and witnessing, the STF members have the chance to better understand the course of their parents and to inherit their foundation.

The STF year starts in the middle of September and ends at the beginning of August, with a graduation ceremony to which parents and friends are invited.

For more information, contact Deborah Cali (stfwsreg@gmail.com). For an interactive look, check out this video from the 2012-2013 class.



Oceania Leadership Training (OLT)

The Oceania Leadership Team (OLT) is a volunteer youth initiative designed to strengthen the character of its participants and train them to become future leaders. OLT brings youth from around the world to Australia and the outlying Pacific islands. The participants are involved in community building, character strengthening, and leadership development activities. One of the highlights of the OLT experience is a trip to one of the Pacific islands where they assist in service projects and education.

For more information, contact Daniel Meadows (oceanialeadershipteam@gmail.com). You can also visit the OLT website or Facebook page.

There are so many options to choose from

Our Unificationist community recognizes the value that service programs offer not only to the community it serves but also to its participants. It gives our young people the time to understand themselves and deeply connect to a higher purpose. A gap year may not be right for everyone but it is an option to broaden one's outlook on how to move forward not just academically but also on how to give and get the most out of life.