[High School Seniors Opting for 'Gap Year'](https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=12525750)

MICHEL MARTIN, host:

It's August, and that means that a new class of college freshmen is packing up and preparing to head to campus. But not every high school graduate who's able to go to college is choosing to enroll right away. A number of students are now deciding to delay college admission for a year to pursue their passions or just to get a break. It's called a gap year.

And joining us to talk about this trend is Ian Shapira. He wrote an article about it for this weekend's Washington Post Sunday Magazine. It's titled "Eye on the Goal." He joins us by phone from Guatemala.

Also with us is Tiffany Hamer. She took a year off before attending her current school, South Carolina State University. She joins us here in the studio. Welcome to you both.

Ms. TIFFANY HAMER (Student, South Carolina State University): Thank you.

Mr. IAN SHAPIRA (Reporter, Washington Post): Thank you.

MARTIN: Tiffany, why did you decide to take a year off before going to college? What did you do with that year?

Ms. HAMER: I worked for an AmeriCorps a company called City Year, which brings diverse group of 17 to 24 year olds to do a - year of community service.

MARTIN: What made you want to do that?

Ms. HAMER: Well, at the time, you know, I was embarking on my college years. I was graduating from high school, and I was looking for funding for a school and I ran across City Year.

MARTIN: Ian, how many students are following Tiffany's example and are taking that year off to - I don't know - regroup or just sort of get it together?

Mr. SHAPIRA: It's not really well known. There's been no formal research on this kind of demographic, so to speak. But a lot of experts out there think it is growing based on what they're hearing anecdotally from guidance counselors in schools and high school across the country. When I spoke with a National Association for College Admissions Counselors in high schools, they tell me that when they speak to guidance counselors in high schools, they're hearing that particular stuff.

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