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FROST VALLEY YMCA

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Application Deadline Approaches for Gap Semester in Colombia

A chance for college-aged adults to experience more of the world and help local communities thrive.

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CLARYVILLE — In partnership with YMCA Colombia, Frost Valley YMCA has developed a Gap Semester Program— a structured program for young individuals between the ages of 18 and 22 to experience more of the world and contribute their time and talent toward supporting the goals of various Colombian communities, from September 5 to December 12, 2018. The deadline for applications, March 31, 2018, is fast approaching.

The traditional path of graduating high school and attending college for four years is not for everyone. Taking time before, during, or after attending college is becoming increasingly popular and offers an authentic opportunity to recalibrate one's focus. Frost Valley's Gap Semester is a 3-month program that ensures participants' time is spent gaining independence and a broader worldview before beginning the pressures of academic college life or entering the workforce. This uniquely immersive experience provides participants with the opportunity to contribute three areas of support in Colombia, including youth education, community development and sustainable agriculture.

Throughout the three months, participants will be fully immersed in Colombian cultures and communities. After spending a week at Frost Valley YMCA preparing for a three-month stay in Colombia, participants will move throughout the country to experience various cultures and provide different levels of support.

The first month of the program will take place in Villavicencio Meta where participants will attend sessions about global citizenship, cultural awareness, and Colombian cuisine. Once they are accustomed to the community, they will meet with a representative from the Secretary of Education for public schools and spend their days at a local school, working with students. The program will continue in Bogota, where participants will assist at Colombia YMCA's English-Immersion camp and the eco-center followed by a tour of the Candelaria, a historic section of the city and other landmarks. The final leg of the trip takes place in Ibague, where participants will have the opportunity to explore the city and partake in a workshop on development and agricultural sustainability.

In their three months abroad, these young adults experience new perspectives, gain independence, become more responsible, and develop a sense of cultural worldliness. Financial assistance is available for those who qualify. "This is an exciting program that can change the lives of children, while providing opportunities for stewardship, personal growth, and travel to young adults participating," says Zach Eigenbrodt, head of the program. "It's amazing to see

the the work that YMCA Colombia has already done to help the community, and we are thrilled to team up with such a dedicated group of individuals. This is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for college-aged adults.”

For you adults ages 18-22 interested in applying, visit www.frostvalley.org/gap-year for more information.

Photos and interviews are available upon request. Please contact Chief Marketing Officer Amanda Hinski at Ahinski@frostvalley.org.

About Frost Valley YMCA

Frost Valley YMCA is a values-driven organization that fosters youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility through outdoor educational and recreational programs for all. Located in the heart of the Catskill Mountains, Frost Valley provides year-round access to nature and fun through programs such as summer camp, adventure trips, farm camp, equestrian programs, group and family retreats, school trips, teambuilding and more. Frost Valley is guided in this pursuit by its core values which serve as pathways for campers and guests as they bond with nature and each other: Caring, Community, Diversity, Honesty, Inclusiveness, Respect, Responsibility, and Stewardship.

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