



FAQ

What is the “If I Had A Trillion Dollars” National Youth Video Contest?

The video contest was launched nationwide in May 2010 to call attention to the \$1 trillion the U.S. has already spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Youth age 13-23 were asked to address the military budget and use their videos to explore how **they** would spend the \$1 trillion on themselves, their schools, their communities and their country.

Over 45 videos were submitted from across the country and 6 winners were chosen from New York City, Boston, Western Massachusetts, Los Angeles, the Bay Area and Portland, Oregon. The First Prize winners are Briseida Montiel from New York City and Alia Holness, Anays Mercedes, Richardson Joseph and Kyane Strother from Boston.

Who are the sponsoring organizations, American Friends Service Committee and National Priorities Project?

The **American Friends Service Committee** (AFSC) is a Quaker organization devoted to service, development and peace programs throughout the world. The work of AFSC is based on the belief in the worth of every person, and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.

The **National Priorities Project** (NPP) makes complex federal budget information transparent and accessible so people can prioritize and influence how their tax dollars are spent. NPP holds the vision of an informed and engaged democracy where all people affected by federal spending priorities have the ability and opportunity to participate in shaping our nation's budget.



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How were winners selected?

Winning videos were selected based on clarity of message about the cost of war, originality of concept and technical aspects of their videos. AFSC and NPP chose a panel of judges that represented a diverse array of experience in the arts and media as well as an understanding of the federal budget.

The judges included: Diana Coryat, co-founder of Global Action Project, a youth media organization based in New York City; Vijay Prashad, George and Martha Kellner Chair in South Asian History and Professor of International Studies at Trinity College; Andrea Assaf, a performer, writer, director and cultural organizer and Haydn Reiss, an award-winning filmmaker who recently produced the film, "Every War Has Two Losers".

Why do a video contest on the federal budget?

Our nation is at a crossroads. The current economic crisis brings into stark relief the grim realities facing state and local governments and their social service sectors. In 2011, 46 out of 50 states face significant deficits, which are projected to increase in 2012. This has triggered deep cuts in funding to already stretched and underfunded programs and initiatives.

The crisis at the state and local level is often solely

attributed to declining tax revenue. State and local budget analysts and members of the media rarely consider the impact of federal funding on the current crisis. Yet, between 2001 and 2010, federal grant funding for state and local governments only increased by 14 percent, lagging behind the 28 percent growth of the federal budget.

At the same time military spending outpaced federal budget growth with a 41

percent increase. Declining and slowing revenue to the states is a long-standing trend, not an anomaly -- especially with regard to the pending Continuing Resolution for FY2011 and the FY2012 federal budget -- which means that city-based Title 1, Head Start, Community Development Block Grants, the Children's Health Insurance Program -- and a host of other vital community programs -- will continue making do with less for years to come.

