

# Youth Civic Engagement Project

Using the arts to engage youth about issues which impact them and our community

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) invites high school-aged youth programs and school groups to participate in creative projects, using the arts to engage youth on issues of economic justice, war, peace, and hope for the future. **We believe that youth have important things to say, should learn about economic and social issues and speak out about policies that will impact all of us.**

AFSC Peace Interns will work with high school-aged youth through our youth programs, during the 2014-15 school year. After learning about peace and justice issues, youth can participate in video and spoken word projects and in a social change institute enabling them to express their ideas and hopes for the future and to take action to better our community and world.

The first opportunity will be participation in the national **AFSC youth film festival, “If I Had a Trillion Dollars” (IHTD)**. The IHTD project teaches youth about U.S. federal spending and budget priorities and how they impact their community. Youth then will be guided in creating 3-minute videos about how they would spend our tax dollars and submit them to the film festival. After the completion of videos youth will be invited to a national screening and lobbying event in Washington, D.C. as well as participation in a Kansas City screening event.



A second opportunity, organized with The Writers Place, is the **“If I Could Change the World” Spoken Word Project**. The Spoken Word Project engages youth in envisioning the world in which they would like to live and in creating spoken word pieces to communicate their visions.

Following classroom and youth program sessions youth will be invited to attend a day-long workshop to refine and develop their writing. Youth who wish can then participate in performances in traditional and non-traditional venues.

In each project AFSC interns and community volunteers will meet with youth groups and school classes and guide them through the activities. The *IHTD project* will take place from September through December 2014. Video submission deadline for the film festival will be early January 2015. The *“If I Could Change the World...” spoken word project* will begin in January 2015 and end with performances in area venues in March through June.

The American Friends Service Committee believes that youth have a crucial part to play in creating a more just and peaceful community and world! And so AFSC invites youth to participate in a **2-week Social Change Institute, June 2015**. High school-aged youth will participate in training and hands on experiences in the practice of nonviolent social change. The two weeks of experiential learning / popular education activities will include afternoon workshops, organizing meetings, visits with local activists and planning and conducting one or more social change actions. AFSC will provide a stipend for youth who participate. Go to <http://bit.ly/KC-social-change> for details.



**“So plant your own gardens and decorate your own soul,  
instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers.” ~ Jorge Luis Borges**

Interested school and youth groups can contact AFSC to find out how their class or group can participate at 816 931-5256, or [afsckc@afsc.org](mailto:afsckc@afsc.org). For information go to [www.afsc.org/kansascity](http://www.afsc.org/kansascity)



**American Friends  
Service Committee**