THE BUDGET IS A BIG DEAL:
WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IT

It may seem confusing at times, but congressional budget debates (also known as the “appropriations” process) determine how government money is being spent — and those choices reflect our priorities as a country.

As young people who live at the intersections both in our identities and passions, there are many things we care about. Here are a few items to watch, as cuts to these programs could drastically affect the health and educational success of our generation:

**Pell Grants**
Pell grants are federal grants available to low and middle-income undergraduate students to help them access post-secondary education. Currently over nine million students (27% of all students) access Pell Grants and the maximum award is $5,550. Cuts to Pell Grants could make college even more out of reach for low and middle-income students, especially as tuition costs continue to increase.

**TRIO**
The Federal TRIO Programs (TRIO) help ensure that low-income, first-generation students, adult learners, veterans, and individuals with disabilities have the support necessary to access and succeed in the university environment. Congress recently cut TRIO by $26.6 million. This cut will strip services away from approximately 25,000 students across the nation this year alone and future cuts would only deny more of the students the support services they need to thrive in college.

**Title X Family Planning**
Title X is a federal grant program to provide low-income women and families with contraceptive information, supplies, and services. In 2009, more than half of patients who accessed services at Title X clinics were between the ages of 15 and 24. In this economic climate, Title X clinics stretch limited funding to serve more patients. Congress recently cut Title X funding by $17 million after social conservatives tried — and failed — to end the program completely.

**Sex Education**
Since 1996, the US government has spent more than $1.5 billion on abstinence-only-until-marriage programs. When President Obama came into office, more than two-thirds of the annual funding directed towards these programs was cut. Some members of Congress want to bring back these failed programs. Currently, the majority of federal sex education programs are funded under the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative (TPPI). Under TPPI, evidence-based and promising programs will reach approximately 800,000 young people. Young people have a right to complete and accurate information — whether or not they choose to have sex. This spring, Congress tried to zero out TPPI.
WHAT IS THE CIVIL LIBERTIES AND PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAM (CLPP)?

CLPP is a national reproductive rights and justice organization dedicated to educating, mentoring, and inspiring new generations of advocates, leaders, and supporters. Combining activism, organizing, leadership training, and movement building, CLPP promotes an inclusive agenda that advances reproductive rights and health, and social and economic justice.

PROJECTS

Annual Reproductive Justice Conference
CLPP’s annual conference for student and community activists, From Abortion Rights to Social Justice: Building the Movement for Reproductive Freedom, connects people to organizations and campaigns locally, nationally, and internationally, and provides them with information, analysis, and “how-to” organizing to bring back to their own campuses and communities. Join us next year, April 13-15, 2012!

RRASC Summer Internship Program
The Reproductive Rights Activist Service Corps is a national program that supports the leadership development of local students interested in connecting their academic studies to reproductive rights and social justice activism through paid summer internships.

New Leadership Networking Initiative (NLNI)
NLNI is a training and leadership-building network for new and emerging activists. NLNI members work at a wide range of reproductive rights and social justice organizations and, through participation in the network, create new relationships and collaborations that are energizing and expanding the movement.

CLPP Student Activist Group
The CLPP student group consists of activists from the 5 Colleges and broader community who want to develop their skills to organize for reproductive and social justice. The CLPP student group runs “Activist 101” trainings and is the driving force behind CLPP’s annual conference.

Contact clpp@hampshire.edu or 413.559.5416 for more info!

-continued from page 1

This is by no means an exhaustive list, and you should also keep an eye on: Medicaid; Centers for Disease Control funding (which oversees most HIV/AIDS programs); HeadStart; and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) – a nutrition program for low-income families.

Don’t let politicians and journalists distract you with panic over the deficit. The United States DOES have money – Congress just has to decide where to spend it. As a community of youth activists and allies, we need to tell Congress OUR priorities so that programs we care get the funding they need.

For more information and to stay up-to-date on the budget and its impact on young people, check out www.amplifyyourvoice.org and sign up to receive alerts to hear about opportunities to join the Great American Condom Campaign (applications open in January) and Campus Organizers (applications open in April) where you can get training and technical assistance on how to be a sexual health and rights campus organizer!

Sarah Audelo is the Senior Domestic Policy Manager at Advocates for Youth. She works on a variety of issues related to young people’s sexual health and rights including: sex education, LGBT rights, HIV/AIDS, contraceptive access and abortion access.
This summer, the Reproductive Rights Activist Service Corps (RRASC) sent students from six Western Massachusetts colleges and universities to twenty-four organizations across the country. By partnering with organizations that range from community-based, grassroots groups to international policy advocacy institutions, RRASC provides students with diverse, invaluable, hands-on learning experiences.

**Laura Harris**  
Mount Holyoke College ’14  
Major: African American Studies  
Hometown: New York City  
RRASC Site: National Advocates for Pregnant Women

What was the most exciting part of your internship? Between brown bag lunches, guest speakers, multiple articles, various books, remarkable staff and more, I don’t think I ever stopped learning. The movement just kept growing everyday I went into NAPW’s office, and that was what also made the internship very exciting.

If you had to do it again, would you be a RRASC? I always enjoyed waking up and thinking, “Yes! I’m going to the NAPW office today!” Although I am very attached to NAPW, I would be a RRASC all over again to see what other internships have to offer and how they too could expand the world I entered into of reproductive and social justice issues. Being a RRASC has been one of the most worthwhile things I’ve done in my life.

**Hallie Hoffman**  
Smith College ’14  
Major: History  
Hometown: Brooklyn, NY  
RRASC Site: Queers for Economic Justice

Why did you apply to RRASC? This summer I wanted to organize outside of an academic institution in a queer and radical space. I was interested in deepening and broadening my relationship to the Reproductive Justice Movement, specifically queer justice work. I was excited by this opportunity to work with such visionary organizations committed to a broad social justice framework and the struggles of more marginalized communities. I am deeply committed to community organizing, and I wanted to learn about the inner workings of non-profit social justice organizations and to find my place in this work. I was looking for an opportunity to live my politics because I believe that is the only way to fully understand and develop them. RRASC was the perfect opportunity to do so.

What is your advice for future interns? My advice is to fully engage and not to hide from your potential. As an intern, be visionary and show your organization that you are capable of doing more than just administrative work. To commit to a successful RRASC internship is to commit to challenging and pushing yourself as an activist and thinker.

**Hayley Maier**  
Hampshire College ’08F  
Major: Medical Anthropology and Women’s Health  
Hometown: South Orange, NJ  
RRASC Site: The Doula Project

Why did you apply to RRASC? I applied to the RRASC program because it not only connects you to great reproductive rights organizations around the country, but it makes working for these organizations financially possible. Many smaller and newer organizations such as the Doula Project don’t have the means to pay an intern but can benefit from the extra help. Likewise, the intern benefits greatly from experiencing the challenges of a relatively new NGO. I knew the RRASC program would give me insight as to what this work is like before I begin the job search when I graduate.

How do you plan to bring what you learned this summer back to campus? One of the most important things that I learned is to never have assumptions about what kind of women get abortions and why. There is no specific type of woman that has an abortion. Women from all walks of life have abortions. Their reasoning ranges from already having children, lack of finances, still in school, not having a partner, and the list goes on. After speaking to many patients about their situation, it solidified my feelings that we should trust women to make decisions regarding their bodies and lives. My Div III is going to focus on the movement for the decriminalization of abortion in Argentina which I have
decided after seeing how important it is for women to have access to this procedure.

Ivonne Ortega
Amherst College ’12
Major: Women and Gender Studies, Environmental Studies
Hometown: Ballston Spa, NY
RRASC Site: NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado

What was the most exciting part of your internship? One of my main projects this summer was to do research and come up with a two-hour reproductive justice workshop for the staff at NARAL CO. Planning this event and coming up with the workshop exposed me to a lot of different resources and organizations in the Reproductive Justice community and in the non-profit community of Colorado and forced me to come up with my own working definition of what reproductive justice is.

What did you do during your “free” time? A lot of the time I spent outside of the NARAL office and tabling at festivals, I was exploring Colorado. I would say that I spent most of this summer on my bike, but other than riding around the city, I was able to go hiking and backpacking outside of the city. Also I got a library card and took a knitting class at the library for three weeks and learned how to knit! It was nice to be doing something that I was excited about this summer, but still have a lot of downtime that I don’t have during the school year. I spent a lot of that time doing arts and crafts and exploring the differences of the West.

How do you plan to bring what you learned this summer back to campus? I plan to use the information that I gained to improve some of the reproductive rights initiatives on and around the UMass campus. I also plan to bring all that I learned to my home community and create a youth group. Most importantly, I plan to use my resources and acquired networks in all future projects.

Eshe Shukura
Hampshire College ’09F
Major: Movement in Movements: The Theatrics of Movement Building
Hometown: Atlanta, GA
RRASC Site: Different Avenues

What was the most exciting part of your internship? I really enjoyed working on the organizational restructuring of my organization. I liked to know that the organization was taking in my thoughts and my opinions. I was amazed that my voice counted. My name was printed on a Different Avenues booklet! It was a rewarding experience.

What did you do during your “free” time?
I mostly would go to free or cheap events. I went to happy hours, plays, and movies. I spent time with my house family. I also traveled outside of DC many weekends.

What is your advice for future interns?
First, enter the experience with an open mind and enthusiasm. Second, never be afraid to ask questions or ask for help. You are not expected to be perfect!

Naja Sobers
UMass Amherst ’12
Major: Public Health
Hometown: Millville, MA
RRASC Site: New York Civil Liberties Union, Teen Health Initiative

What was the best or most exciting part of your internship? My discovery of unfamiliar civil liberties issues, especially those outside of the realm of reproductive rights. Each staff member of the NYCLU would enthusiastically share zher mission with zher colleagues, regardless of the colleagues’ specialty. With the advice of many, zhe would form an action plan. Because of these collaborations, information and education would constantly flow through the office. Interns were never excluded from these conversations; in fact they were always invited to join. I was able to learn something new every day.

What is your advice for future interns?
Make the most of your internship. You are there to learn, but also you there to make things happen. You are chosen for RAASC because you shake things up. Spend your summer not only learning, but shaking.

Luis Vargas
Hampshire College ’09F
Major: Humanities and Social Thought, Literature
Hometown: Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
RRASC Site: National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, NYC

What was the best or most exciting part of your internship? One of the best parts was NLIHR’s 2nd Annual Latina Week of Action for Reproductive Health. Everyone at the office worked hard on collecting donations, writing blogs and letters, petitioning, and screening films, among many other activities that took
place during the week. I particularly enjoyed designing a shoe letter petition and connecting with the Latina Advocacy Network groups around the country. Another great part of my internship was when I had to document a personal story. I wrote about experiences with my sisters in the Dominican Republic and the topic of abortion, mostly because I engaged a lot of what I had learned from the internship (about reproductive health policies, and so on) to highlight the ineluctable values and beliefs of Dominican society that have significantly influenced women’s reproductive choices.

What is your advice for future interns? Interns should not always expect their supervisors to give them instructions for every single project or small task. Staff can have demanding responsibilities with their own work. I advise interns to always take initiative and keep themselves busy throughout the course of the internship, even if times come when you will be called upon to do immediate work for your supervisor. It is important to keep in mind that internships are great opportunities not only to do engaging and professional work, individually or collectively, but to challenge oneself in unique ways. This can go a long way towards determining what your true passions are and finding yourself in the process. Finally, you will see that taking initiative can give you enough work and responsibilities for the time being.

What was the best or most exciting part of your internship? The most exciting aspects of working at SisterSong were seeing the way Women of Color - founded and - operated organizations interact with the communities they serve as well as one another. Each of the women working at SisterSong have different experiences and understandings of the causes they serve, yet they have opted to band together and work towards improving the identities and experiences they share. In academia, few opportunities exist for women of color to complicate the intersections of the personal and political in a public setting, however, SisterSong provided me this platform, as my analysis is set to be featured in their fall newsletter.

How do you plan to bring what you learned this summer back to campus? Because of my increased interest in the Reproductive Justice framework, it is my hope to connect with other RRASC scholars, past and present, to host a dialogue or roundtable of some sort where we can discuss ways to use what we’ve learned to improve campus life. Through this, I hope to build lasting coalitions and student groups that will work to integrate the core principles of social and reproductive justice into everyday campus life and wherever their experiences shall lead them.

To learn more about this year’s RRASC interns, visit:
http://clpp.hampshire.edu/projects/internship

Brittany Williams
Hampshire College ‘09F
Major: Afro-American Studies, Media Studies, Pre-Law
Hometown: Atlanta, GA
RRASC Site: SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective

Why did you apply to RRASC? After taking my first feminism class in the Fall of 2010, I knew I wanted to expand my understanding of feminism. It wasn’t until I took this course that I seriously confronted my previously held belief that feminism was synonymous with improving white women’s livelihood; and what better way could I complicate this ideology than by working with Black feminist organizations!
As students arrive on campus this week, I am excited to start a new chapter at Hampshire—as PopDev’s first Reproductive and Environmental Justice Fellow. This fall, I will be helping to coordinate Bridging Movements to Build Climate Justice, a national climate justice convening in October, organized by PopDev and allies, as well as working with student interns to develop their political writing skills.

CLPP and PopDev were a home base for me throughout college. I was able to connect with and provide valuable support to organizations doing powerful on-the-ground reproductive justice work within their communities. My time as a RRASC intern with HIPS (Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive) was one of the most formative experiences of my life. I did street outreach, staffed the emergency hotline, and helped start the syringe exchange program. As a student conference coordinator for the 2010 conference, From Abortion Rights to Social Justice: Building the Movement for Reproductive Freedom, I developed my organizing skills, working side-by-side with seasoned activists. In my final year, I honed my social media skills on the 30th Anniversary blog, uncovering the long, proud history of program participants organizing, speaking out, and broadening the scope of causes we believe in.

This past July, CLPP sent Akira Céspedes Pérez and me to facilitate a day-long leadership institute entitled We Are the Movement at the SisterSong Let’s Talk About Sex Conference in Miami, Florida. The institute provided much needed space for young leaders to map the history of our movement, connect and network with each other, share our visions for reproductive justice, and develop skills and tools to take back to our own communities and organizing efforts. We discussed common definitions of reproductive justice, and explored what reproductive justice means to us. We moved through a timeline of reproductive oppression and freedom, adding our own knowledge and experiences, ate great food, and discussed our work in the movement at a networking lunch. In the afternoon, we brainstormed and developed a collective vision for the reproductive justice movement and created flexible action plans to guide us toward making our individual and collective visions and goals reality. At the end of the day, we produced short “vision videos” (available on the CLPP YouTube page) to amplify our voices and inspire others to get theirs out into the world. We got to spend the rest of the conference attending workshops together, talking about what we were learning, swimming in the ocean, cracking jokes, eating Cuban food in Little Havana, having sleepovers, and getting to know each other better. I learned a great deal as a facilitator—namely, that there is such a large pool of intelligent, passionate, driven young people of color and young allies from all over the country who are a part of this movement and bring so much wisdom and insight to the table. We are an incredible resource. We can draw on each other for support, encouragement, and advice. We can build each other up as we continue to build this movement. We are the movement.
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2011 RRASC INTERNS!

CHILOE BARRERA-CLOYD (Hampshire)
Sylvia Rivera Law Project, New York, NY

SANDRA CHEN (Mount Holyoke)
Center for Sex and Culture, San Francisco, CA

MEGAN DONAHUE (Smith)
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, Washington, DC

TRACY GEBHART (UMass)
Young People For, Washington, DC

BAILEY HANSELMAN (Hampshire)
Generations Ahead, Oakland, CA

LAURA HARRIS (Mount Holyoke)
National Advocates for Pregnant Women, New York, NY

HALLIE HOFFMAN (Smith)
Queers for Economic Justice, New York, NY

TORIANA LEILAND-JONES (Westfield State)
Performance Project: First Generation, Springfield, MA

MARIANNA LUNA (Hampshire)
Third Wave Foundation, New York, NY

HAYLEY MAIER (Hampshire)
Doula Project, New York, NY

NADINE MCKENZIE (Smith)
MergerWatch - Raising Women’s Voices, New York, NY

MARA MONTALVO (UMass)
The Care Center, Holyoke, MA

KANDACE MONTGOMERY (UMass)
Prison Birth Project, Western MA

CHIEDZA MUFUNDE (Mount Holyoke)
Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies, New Orleans, LA

MEREDITH NICHOLSON (Smith)
Ibis Reproductive Health, Boston, MA

IVONNE ORTEGA (Amherst)
NARAL Pro-Choice CO, Denver, CO

IESHA RAMOS (Hampshire)
Parkmed Physicians, New York, NY

KAREN RENDA (Westfield State)
NARAL Pro-Choice TX, Austin, TX

YANDALIS REYES (Westfield State University)
Magee Women’s Research Foundation, Pittsburgh, PA

ESHE SHAKURA (Hampshire)
Different Avenues, Washington, DC

NAJA SOBERS (UMass)
New York Civil Liberties Union - Teen Health Initiative, New York, NY

TIFFANY TAI (UMass)
National Network of Abortion Funds, Boston, MA

LUIS VARGAS (Hampshire)
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, New York, NY

BRITTANY WILLIAMS (Hampshire)
SisterSong, Atlanta, GA

DONATE TO CLPP

“One day a week some doctors would host a free clinic. None of [the patients] spoke English so I felt really good about myself because I was the one person who could translate for them. I actually gave a lot of patients my phone number and they called me when they went into labor and I got to go and keep translating for them.” - Yandalis Reyes, ’11 RRASC at Magee Women’s Hospital

“I was in a room with 150 other college kids who knew what it was like to campaign until you lose your voice, until you’re screaming in the megaphone, until you’re about ready to pass out. It made me reignite this passion that I didn’t know I’d even lost; it changed me and my life.” - Tracy Gebhardt, ’11 RRASC at Young People For

“Being with the Network really taught me a lot about what it actually, really means to be a woman in this country, just basic facts that many people aren’t aware of... that the Hyde Amendment exists and that abortion is about economic justice.” - Tiffany Tai, ’11 RRASC at National Network of Abortion Funds

Help us continue to provide life-changing experiences to students through our paid summer internships.

Your donations ensure that RRASC internships are available to all students, especially to those who cannot participate without financial support.

Please use the enclosed envelope to give as generous a gift as you can, or give online at:

http://clpp.hampshire.edu/donate

Your contribution directly supports CLPP’s new leadership projects, including the annual activist conference, student internships, and our young activist network.

THANK YOU!
CLPP’s annual conference connects young people to reproductive justice organizations and campaigns locally, nationally and internationally, and provides them with information, analysis, and “how-to” organizing to bring back to their own campuses and communities. The conference presents a broad view of the issues, linking reproductive freedom to a broad range of human rights and social justice issues, including health care, race and class, LGBTQI+ rights and gender justice, pregnancy and the freedom to parent, environmental justice, immigrant and worker rights, youth liberation, and freedom from violence and abuse.