



All People Be Happy
foundation

2011 Annual Report



Building a World Where All People Can Be Happy

Letter From Our Founders

Dear Friends,

The **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** was created as a legacy to the life of Eric Tang and his vision that we can build a world where all people can be happy. 2011 marked our fourth full year of operation, and in these four years, we have made over \$420,000 in grants while keeping expenses down to 3% of our contributions. Our grants totaled \$118,300 in 2011.

Our vision is a simple one, a world where extreme poverty is eliminated. We strive to achieve that lofty goal by finding and supporting organizations with innovative approaches for alleviating the root causes of global poverty. We focus on five areas: Education and Training, Health Care, Clean Water, Sustainable Agriculture, and MicroEnterprise Development. In 2011, this focus led us to award major grants totaling \$98,500. The following pages describe the projects undertaken by the major grant recipients: Thanda, Asha for Education, Global Emergency Care Collaborative, Friends of Nepal Pariwar Foundation, Face AIDS, Bodhi Tree Foundation, Sankara Eye Foundation, Maya Nut Institute, The Kossoye Project, Indego Africa, and Common Ground for Africa. In addition, we made smaller grants totaling \$19,800 to 7 other organizations.

2011 also marked the second year of the **AllPeopleBeHappy Volunteer Service Award** program. These awards are grants to enable impassioned volunteers the financial support they need to enable them to give of their time and talents doing service projects abroad. You can read about the work that was done in Ecuador, Ghana, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda by our nine 2011 awardees in these pages.

We are proud of the partnerships that we have forged and are confident that together we are making the world a better place. We are humbled by the generosity of our many donors, and with your continued support we will succeed.



Sunny C. Tang
President



Barbara Steen Tang
Executive Director

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Education and Training

Since its beginning in 2008, **Thanda** has provided daily after-school support to orphans of AIDS and vulnerable children in local schools throughout the province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. These children all live in poor, rural communities where 39% of pregnant women are HIV positive and 27% of children are orphaned. Rather than being sent to orphanages, children are adopted by families in their home communities. The children of **Thanda** receive nourishing meals and engage in after-school activities, during which they complete homework, play sports, learn academics, develop skills, and are provided personal guidance. The grant of \$10,000 from the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** provides daily meals to 50 children and art and computer programs in grades 8-11 after school.

Asha for Education is a US-based 100% volunteer driven non-profit organization dedicated to the support of basic education in India. It served as fiscal sponsor for two Indian organizations working in New Delhi, **SSrishti Learning Center** and **Etasha Society**. **SSrishti Learning Center** is a school serving children living in slums of New Delhi. Public schools are available in India, but they do not address the social issues which often keep children in poverty from attending school. At the **SSrishti Learning Center**, children are given uniforms, nutritious meals, and a quality education at no cost. The founder and other administrators of the program work without monetary compensation. 100% of donations, such as the \$5,200 in grants in 2011 from **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation**, are used to run the program and ensure the health and wellbeing of the students. A grant of \$1,500 was made to **Etasha Society**, which provides employability and vocational skills training to youngsters living in the slums of New Delhi. Skills being taught include English proficiency, computer skills, interviewing skills, and general social skills. **Etasha Society** then works to place the graduates in jobs with reputable companies.



Health Care

The mission of **Global Emergency Care Collaborative** (GECC) is to improve health by creating or improving access to quality emergency care in the developing world. Founded in 2008, GECC has successfully established an Emergency Department (ED) at a rural district hospital in Uganda, developed a curriculum on emergency care, and trained a cadre of emergency care specialists - Emergency Nurse Practitioners (ENPs). The first \$10,000 grant from the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** was used to train a new group of four ENPs by these specialists. The second \$10,000 grant in 2011 was used to train the third class of the now renamed Emergency Care Practitioners (ECP). Each ECP sees about 900 trauma patients per year, so the training of more ECPs can dramatically improve the quality of care for trauma patients throughout Uganda. In addition, the Ministry of Health of Uganda has agreed to investigate where, when, and how to build and open EDs nationally, and will work on officially certifying ECPs to be a new mid-level cadre of providers in the country. Mbarara University of Science and Technology (one of the four medical schools in Uganda) is on track to approve and certify the emergency care curriculum for a Diploma in Emergency Care; GECC has been asked to co-manage this teaching program.

For many years, Nepal has had one of the highest rates of maternity mortality in Asia. **Friends of Nepal Pariwar Foundation**, for the past 3 years, has provided assistance for salaries of five nurse-midwives in four rural clinics in Nepal, and for in-service training and transportation expenses for the nurse-midwives, through the Friends' partner organization in Nepal, BBP-Pariwar. With a \$5,000 grant from the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation**, Friends has 1) added 3 nurse-midwives in 3 of the clinics so to allow for 24-hour birthing service, and 2) upgraded the in-patient delivery facilities in one of the clinic. Each nurse-midwife provides reproductive health services to an average of 1,400 persons per year, so the addition of 3 nurse-midwives strongly impacts the community.

FACE AIDS organizes youth chapters in Rwanda to fight HIV/AIDS. They currently have 35 chapters involving about 1,200 members across Rwanda's Eastern Province. With the \$10,000 grant from **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation**, six chapters with the highest potential proposals receive approximately \$1,000 each. Each chapter implements its project over a





six-month period; projects are in the areas of malnutrition, drug use, sexual health, and maternal health, all as they related to HIV/AIDS. In the area of pediatric malnutrition, several chapters chose to teach families about identifying signs of malnourishment, maintaining good hygiene, preparing a balanced diet, and building a kitchen garden. Other chapters chose projects on circumcision promotion, malaria prevention, or substance abuse intervention. Chapter members use these hands-on leadership experiences to learn interpersonal skills, community engagement, partnership building, and project management.

Bodhi Tree Foundation's Safe Motherhood program is an ongoing project in Humla, Nepal, that has been active for four years, helping the women to improve maternal and newborn health. They have organized and funded five Safe Motherhood classes, educated more than 150 women, purchased and distributed over 1,000 Clean Delivery Kits and provided a year's supply of pre/postnatal vitamins to 2,100 pregnant and breastfeeding women. The \$3,000 grant from **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** was used for Safe Motherhood classes and clean delivery kits.

Sankara Eye Foundation supports community eye care activities in India by Sankara Eye Care Institutions, which manages eight hospitals and is the number one free eye care institution covering rural areas in India, carrying out over 105,000 eye surgeries annually. Grants totaling \$4,000 were made to **Sankara Eye Foundation** by the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** in 2011.

Sustainable Agriculture

Maya Nut Institute alleviates poverty, malnutrition and deforestation in Central America and Mexico by teaching about the nutrition, uses and processing of Maya Nut. Maya Nut is a nutritious, delicious, versatile and easy to harvest nut from a rainforest tree, which can provide both food and income. The first two \$10,000 grants from the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** (2008-2009) were used to conduct Maya Nut workshops in El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Guatemala. With this and other funding, 16,000 women from 1,100 rural communities have been trained, and more than 1.9 million Maya Nut trees have been planted. In addition, 23 women's microenterprises have been formed, which provide jobs and income for over 300 women. In 2011, a third grant of \$4,800 was awarded to train women in the departments of Choluteca, Lempira, and Copan in Honduras. This was followed by a new grant of \$10,000 in



late 2011 to create a Maya Nut exporting industry with rural women in Chinandega, Nicaragua. The funds will be used to finance organizational development, training, and legalization fees for a women's cooperative/enterprise/agribusiness to produce and market export-quality Maya Nut for the US and local market. **Maya Nut Institute** has found a buyer who has committed to purchase any and all Maya Nut produced for export to US, and a local Nicaraguan business which is interested in developing a local supermarket outlet for Maya Nut. This part of Nicaragua is of particular interest because of the high densities of Maya Nut trees in the area and the high quality of the Maya Nut produced.

The Kossoye Project began in 2005, building on a 45-year relationship between the Kossoye community of 7,000 persons in Ethiopia and Dr. Dennis Carlson, who was Dean of the Public Health College at the University of Gondar in the 1960's. The three \$10,000 grants (2008-2011) from the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** have enabled the Ethiopian Household Vegetable Gardening Program to be launched throughout Kossoye. The funding is being used for 1) support of the 12 Community Health Worker stipends, 2) purchase of seeds and tools for the 1,600 elementary school children, 3) printing of revised gardening manuals, and 4) monthly coffee and health discussion sessions. Thus far, 300 family gardens are thriving, and discussions are being held in all hamlets with over 300 women attendees. The Project is currently being expanded to the communities in Shenkur Mesk, 10 km to the south of Kossoye.

MicroEnterprise Development

Indego Africa, founded in 2006, improves the lives of Rwandan women by providing skills training and export markets for their fair-trade handicrafts. The women in the cooperatives are survivors. They support themselves and the children they are raising by selling their handicrafts to **Indego Africa**. The \$30,000 in grants (2009-2011) from the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** have been used to expand the Hands Up program by providing 1) business management skills training, 2) literacy training, 3) ESL (English as a Second Language) training, and 4) workplace upgrade for the approximately 100 women in its two cooperatives. Eight talented high-achieving students from Generation Rwanda, and one US intern have been conducting the training program for the Cocoki textile cooperative and the Covanya weaving cooperative.





Common Ground for Africa. Over 15,600 families in Western Kenya, have organized themselves into community groups and established Community Trading Depots (CTD) for better terms of trade for their labor. With the \$10,000 grant from **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** in late 2011, **Common Ground for Africa** (CGA) aims to establish a Regional Trading Center (RTC). The RTC will provide the reliable transfer of grain commodities purchased from CTD to higher paying urban markets, and act as training centers for ongoing organic farming skills training. CGA's long term vision is to begin processing, creating value-added packaged products branded under the name Farmers' Own!

Concluded Projects

Support for International Change (SIC) has been working in northern Tanzania since 2002 to limit the impact of HIV/AIDS in rural communities. The first two \$10,000 grants (2008, 2009) from the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** were used to expand SIC's Community-Based Treatment Access Project. This project consists of 4 community-based services: 1) mobile provision of counseling and testing, 2) reproductive health education and HIV prevention workshops, 3) establishment of HIV support groups, and 4) mobile provision of antiretroviral drugs in conjunction with government hospitals. The program, over the 2 year span, taught and/or tested 79,614 persons about HIV/AIDS, trained 150 Community Health Workers (CHW), and provided care for 600 persons with HIV. The third \$10,000 grant (2010-11) was used to support a group of local-based college student volunteers, embedding them within the rural communities to enhance the education and treatment network.

Inside Out Learning. There are many initiatives to build brick and mortar schools in the developing world, but there is more to providing a good education than just building a school. A \$10,000 grant was awarded to **Inside Out Learning** (IOL), an organization which seeks to improve educational experiences and outcomes for the children of Kenya through a teacher training program which emphasizes inquiry-based, active and collaborative learning. The grant was used in 2011 to run two 5-day and four 4-day training sessions for 425 primary school teachers in the Margarini Districts of Kenya. The 5-day sessions first trained 78 teachers in the IOL methodology, and then these teachers trained the other 347 teachers in the 4-day sessions. These teachers in the 34 schools are major influence in the lives of their 24,000 students each year. A recent report indicates that student's performance is improving and there has been an

increased rapport between students and their teachers. Fewer discipline problems have been experienced compared to previous years.

Amizade. Clean Water is the foundation of healthy diet, hygiene, and sanitation. In Karagwe, Tanzania, water is scarce, and the cheapest, most simple, and most effective solution to the Karagwe water shortage is the construction of rooftop water-harvesting systems, i.e., capturing the run-off during the wet season for use during the dry season. **Amizade** initiated in 2008 a 3-year program to install water harvesting systems, with labor and materials provided by local and global volunteers. The three \$10,000 grants from the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** led to the installation of 16 plastic-based family tanks, and 5 very large 70,000 liter locally constructed community tank. The grants provided the funds to construct a massive 300,000 liter water-harvesting system in the small village of Chonyoyo, including gutters, underground piping, and a solar-powered pump for a school, thus bringing clean water to over 300 women and children. Further construction connected the Chonyoyo water tank to a fruit-tree nursery which provides local farmers with healthy food.

Village Health Works (VHW) operates a health clinic in the village of Kiguta, Burundi. Since its opening in December of 2007, the clinic has seen over 40,000 patients. The Food Security Program (FSP) is an initiative of VHW to link the treatment of malnutrition with long-term food security. Before the FSP, the community was growing and eating cassava as their only staple food. Most of them had never seen most of the nutritious crops that the FSP introduced in the area. Crops introduced in the area for the first time by FSP include: moringa, carrot, cabbage, sweet pepper, radish, pineapple, plum, gooseberry, soybean, disease-resistant banana, pomegranate, plus improved variety chicken, rabbit, etc. The first \$20,000 in grants from the **AllPeopleBeHappy foundation** in 2009-2010 was used to procure supplies and to pay 14 Agricultural Extension Workers to teach villagers on how to grow more nutritious food, and to establish and maintain 60 home gardens. In addition, an impressive amount of infrastructure has been built: a raised-bed demonstration garden which later became a production farm, a nursery for food-bearing plants, a large agro forest, shelters for chickens, goats, and cows, and a large-scale composting system. With another \$10,000 grant for 2011, this program was further expanded to encompass neighboring villages and to promote cooperative farming. By the end of 2011, there were 99 home gardens established, and 6 agricultural cooperatives (average of 25 members) from 3 communities, using either their shared land or rented land.



AllPeopleBeHappy Volunteer Service Award

The **AllPeopleBeHappy Volunteer Service Award** enables volunteers to do service projects in the developing world. These Volunteer Service Awards enable impassioned young people to give of their time and talents while expanding their understanding of people and communities living in poverty. This program was launched in early 2010, and there were 5 award winners. Fundraising enabled us to increase the number of award recipients to 9 in 2011.

Clark Alves, Elaine Andres, Michelle Boros, and Nicole Vanessa Teran volunteered with **Support for International Change (SIC)** to support its mission to limit the impact of HIV/AIDS in underserved communities and to train future leaders in global health and development. These students spent months preparing for this assignment, and spent additional time in Tanzania, along with other international volunteers and Tanzanian college students undergoing intensive training before moving in with their host families in rural communities near Arusha. During their time in their home villages, they taught reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention in both formal and informal settings, encourage residents to participate in HIV/AIDS testing opportunities, and helped reduce the stigma and enhance the acceptance of community members living with HIV/AIDS. Living in these rural communities, with no running water or electricity was challenging, but by immersing themselves as members of the community, these individuals had far more positive impacts on the lives of the people that they encountered than they will ever know. Chances are that their experiences in Tanzania will also have a lifelong and profound impact on the lives and futures of these young volunteers.

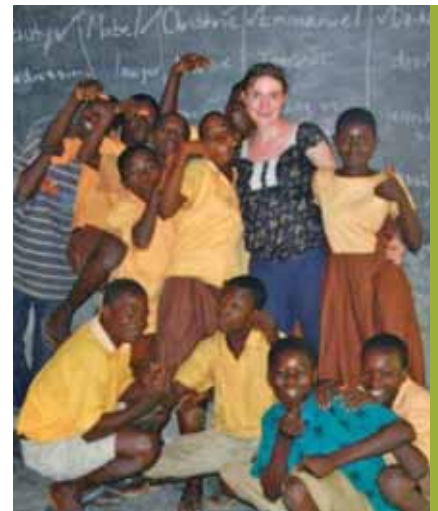
In the winter of 2010/2011, **Robert Fredrickson** participated in an **Amizade** program to build a library and computer center in Jukwa, Ghana. Toward the end of this program he theorized that the addition of a digital projector, screen, and accompanying laptop would enhance training opportunities and could also be used to bring income to the center during non-business hours since there are no movie theaters in the area. He returned in the summer of 2011 to turn his idea into reality. After delivering the projector, he trained teachers and library staff on how to use it, and work with community members to continue generating ideas.



Portions of the **AllPeopleBeHappy** funds went into electrical work needed to complete the computer room, employing a local carpenter to build a table for the projector, paying for on-the ground transportation, and compensating his host family for their hospitality during his stay. After the projector was installed, he made a PowerPoint presentation on “the Internet and its uses,” presenting it to a classroom full of high school students who had never been online before. He was also able to purchase educational DVDs with lessons in math, science and history. In addition, on his final weekend in town, he held the library’s first movie screening, showing a Discovery Channel wildlife program to a room of over a hundred awe-inspired children.

Nicole Kennerly worked with **Ghana Act** which runs a traveling eye clinic that visits local villages with little or no access to healthcare. On these trips, rural communities have free access to eye care, including general eye health, vision, and preventable blindness. She traveled to many villages where she took patient vitals and distributed supplies. On days the eye clinic didn’t take outreach trips, she volunteer taught the sixth grade at a small school in a rural farming village called Saviefe Deme.

Alex Blake has been working in Uganda since March 2011 with **Global Emergency Care Collaborative**, establishing and piloting a training program that lays the groundwork for an informal system of pre-hospital emergency medical services in rural communities. The initial phase was assessment, giving local stakeholders an opportunity to weigh in on the best approach to the development of pre-hospital emergency services. Local stakeholders felt strongly that educating the lay community on how to recognize an emergency and where to seek help would be more impactful than teaching first aid that only addressed trauma. To address this challenge Alex partnered with the Nyakibale Nursing School to conduct structured interviews with groups of lay community members. They compiled a list of danger signs using organization data on the locally most prevalent emergent conditions, such as malaria and pneumonia. Seven interviews took place, each with groups of about thirty adults. This enabled them to compile a list of meanings commonly assigned to each danger sign and the courses of action most commonly taken under such circumstances. Henceforth, these learning will be given as workshops by hospital personnel.





Molly Oshun volunteered as a project leader for **Global Student Embassy's** 6-week sustainable agriculture and youth leadership program in Ecuador. This was her second summer volunteering with GSE in Ecuador. The projects undertaken were 1) ongoing stewardship of the GSE reforestation site at La Punta Gorda preserve just south of Bahía de Caraquez, 2) expansion of the organic garden site at Fanny de Baird High School in the town of Leonidas Plaza, and 3) establishment of a new organic garden site and associated student group in Tos Agua, a largely agricultural community inland from Bahía. In addition, she worked on the personal development of the students through cultural exchange, language practice and reflection activities.

Crissy Vicendese had been working as an intern with **Indego Africa** in New York for over a year, before she spent 3 months in Rwanda furthering the development of new products and quality control systems at Indego Africa's partner cooperatives. In her own words, Crissy's accomplishments by the numbers:

- 87 days spent in Rwanda
- 3 newly engaged artisan groups.
- 90 purchase orders and prototype
- 12 new products added to the Indego Africa product line
- 4,490 scarves knit for the largest commercial knitwear order ever from Rwanda
- 2 new retail partners who ordered 12,623 units for Spring/Summer 2012

Many Thanks to Our Donors

Diamond Level (\$10,000+)

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Frances and Steve Swanson
Barbara and Sunny Tang

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Wendall Zartman Jr

1 matched by Apache

2 matched by ConocoPhillips

3 matched by Chevron

*4 Semester at Sea Fall 2003
Alumni group*

FY 2011 Financial Statement

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	
Checking account	\$31,070
Investment account	10,026
TOTAL ASSETS	\$41,096

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Accounts Payable	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$0

NET ASSETS	\$41,096
TOTAL NET ASSETS & LIABILITIES	\$41,096



REVENUE & EXPENSE STATEMENT

OPERATING REVENUE	
Contributions	\$130,730
Interest & Dividend	19
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	\$130,749

OPERATING EXPENSES	
Program Services:	
Grant to Maya Nut Institute	\$14,800
Grant to Global Emergency Care Collaborative	12,500
Grant to Indego Africa	12,500
Grant to The Kossoye Project	10,000
Grant to Support for International Change	10,000
Grant to Face AIDS	10,000
Grant to Thanda	10,000
Grant to Common Ground for Africa	10,000
Grant to Asha for Education	6,700
Grant to Friends of Nepal Pariwar Foundation	5,000
Grant to Sankara Eye Foundation	4,000
Grant to Bodhi Tree Foundation	3,000
Grant to Omprakash	2,500
Grant to Global Student Embassy	2,000
Grant to American Assistance to Cambodia	1,800
Grant to Walking Mountains Science Center	1,500
Grant to Amizade	1,500
Grant to Purple Songs Can Fly Project	500
<i>Total Program Services</i>	<i>\$118,300</i>
Program Expenses:	
Printing	\$1,075
Website design and maintenance	990
Mail box rental	168
Meeting expenses	375
<i>Total Program Expenses</i>	<i>\$2,608</i>
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$120,908

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	\$ 9,841
BALANCE FROM YEAR END 2010	31,256
NET OPERATING ASSETS	\$41,097

Board of Directors

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Michael Y. Chou

Vice President

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An Essay for the Times...

My version of Plato's 'Republic' in 1000 words or Less

by Eric Tang (3/15/04)

My friend Lance wrote recently:

“ Eric, Your website is very fascinating and it is quite obvious that you spent a great deal of time researching your articles. One can readily decipher your complaints against the current American government and the Bush administration but I am curious...

I want you to do two things: The first is to write your own De Republica. What is the ideal state or government in your mind? This question has been brought up by the greatest philosophers of history from Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, Locke, Hobbes, Jefferson and many others. What is the ideal government or state that Eric Tang envisions? Why would it be superior to that of the current system employed by the United States? How would you arrange social benefits, taxation, and the military structure?

The second thing I would like to see you do is write the ideal candidate for the 2004 United States election. Don't pick a current candidate, but create your own from scratch. Where would this candidate have been educated? Would he have a long record of civil service or possibly a military career? Would he have been a school professor or a modern day Walden? What would be the priority of his campaign issues? What is the most pressing problem of American society that your candidate thinks needs to be addressed? ”

First off, thanks for the praise. Secondly, I'm no Socrates, but I'll give it a whirl...

FDR once said something along the lines that democracy was the worst type of government, except all the rest. I agree. Actually, I have a higher opinion of democracy than that. Although not perfect, it seems the fairest and most logical way of producing a society agreeable to most everybody. With that said, my ideal state would be a democracy — a representative democracy. But it would be a small democracy. I think the US is way too large and our Congress way too small. To have each congressperson representing over half a million people is ridiculous. So the US could do a few things to correct this problem.

1. Expand the federal government to give a representative for every 40,000 people, let's say. That would mean we would have over 7000 congresspersons, or
2. The US could break up into smaller pieces. We could remain the United States for defensive purposes but the real political power could be transferred to the states.

Personally, I would favor the latter for simplicity purposes. Furthermore, the states in the world which I perceive as actual and successful democracies (Sweden, Norway, and Canada) have very small populations. I don't think this is an accident. For a democracy to work, people have to feel like they actually have power. In the US, you really have to be pretty delusional to think you as Joe Schmo have any real power over



the government. Beyond the problems of scale, voting has become a ridiculously meaningless ritual for most Americans because of gerrymandering (which I would bar and instead establish an independent, non-partisan commission to draw district lines which looked more like stacked blocks rather than the scribbling of kindergartners). Plus, there is the disastrous relic of our electoral college in which the candidate who receives a half million more votes ends up losing the election. (Well, technically, it was stolen, but I'll leave that aside.) And, of course, if you've been reading the postings on my website regularly, you'd realize how petrified I am by the perils of e-voting. So many problems to take on, so little time.

But beyond all these systematic problems, I am ignoring the elephant in the corner which is the fundamental flaw of our current government — a legislature tremendously corrupted by wealthy corporate interests. Basically, unless you're Joe Billionaire, the government doesn't care about you or work for you. The United States is a plutocracy, plain and simple.

That leads nicely into my response to the question of what the most pressing problem facing our society is: a disastrously inept campaign financing system. My ideal candidate would seek to address this problem through (among other measures) the establishment of a system of public financing for electoral campaigns — meaning that corporation could not essentially purchase politicians through the form of legalized bribery we euphemistically call "campaign contributions."

To return to the first batch of questions, I think an ideal society would have a strong welfare safety net — universal health care, a well-funded education system with money available for anybody regardless of economic status who wants to go to college; plus, a foreign policy which abides by international law, seeks to strengthen the institutions creating and enforcing those laws, upholds human rights everywhere, and is founded on the principle of nonviolence.

Income tax would be a very small percentage for all: 0% for those under a certain income. 5% for the middle class, 10% for the wealthy. Why so low? Because income is a good thing; it helps you survive day to day, I don't think it should be heavily taxed.

Instead of taxing "goods" like income, we should tax "bads." For example, I would phase in a very large tax for greenhouse gas emissions. Global warming is probably the greatest problem facing humanity at this time and the US is ignoring its responsibility for this deepening crisis unfortunately. A tax on carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases would encourage producers of these pollutants to innovate and generate products that did not contribute to global destruction. Also, the majority of the tax revenue from this venture could be used to subsidize research and development efforts for clean and renewable energy sources.

Other "bads" which I think should be taxed heavily are alcohol, cigarettes, guns, bullets, pesticides, and, after I have legalized them, drugs (marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and all the other goodies which people are going to attain one way or the other so they might as well be through a legal system). And of course, the tax revenue from these would go towards correcting the problems they create

(e.g., subsidies for organic farmers from the taxation on pesticides, drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, health care for lung cancer sufferers, etc.).

Basically, I want a tax system which pushes our nation down a path of health and sustainability, not one which rewards the rich for poisoning our environment, endangering our health, shafting our workers, and exploiting the third world.

As for the military, we currently spends hundreds of billions of dollars a year beefing up a destructive juggernaut which is supposed to be working to make the nation secure. Unfortunately, I believe our behemoth military and its imperial outposts around the globe actually is doing just the opposite — they make us less secure by bullying people around the globe and thus making us a target for revenge. Nevertheless, beyond that, I think those billions wasted are not addressing our nation's most pressing national security issues: 35 million in poverty, 45 million without health care, 30 million going hungry. These are the gravest threats to the health of our nation. Those billions would be far better spent addressing these problems.

Therefore, I would have a very small DEFENSE (not OFFENSIVE) force, enough to secure the borders. Other forces would be trained as UN peacekeepers. All military spending would be done by state-owned companies. No for-profit merchants of death or a military-industrial complex in my Republica. I also really like Dennis Kucinich's idea for a Department of Peace to counter the Department of War (renamed in an Orwellian move as the Department of Defense in 1947) which would make non-violence an organizing principle in both foreign and domestic affairs. The money saved from a less monstrous military would go towards the internal problems I mentioned above.

Responding to the second batch of questions, I don't really care to imagine the background for an ideal candidate though I hope it would be one of civil service — a lifelong activist or something. To me, what matters is the platform and the candidate's conviction to follow through with implementation. I wouldn't care if Mickey Mouse were running our country if he had good ideas and the will to bring those good ideas to life.

As I already stated the number one campaign issue I would have my candidate run on — campaign finance reform. Others would include universal health care with an emphasis on preventive medicine, a sensible drug policy, environmental responsibility, fair trade rather than "free trade", and a peaceful foreign policy based upon respect for international law.

Of course, there's more to write, but I'll let you grade me based on that. So, how'd I do?

– Ericus



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