

- Laramie Project at Robbinsville HS
- TransAction!
- ThinkB4YouSpeak Campaign
- Report on Ally Week in NJ
- Upcoming Events
- GSA Forum a Success
- No Name Calling Week

The Laramie Project at Robbinsville H.S.

By Margo Saltzman

Friday evening my son Jesse and I had the distinct pleasure of attending The Laramie Project at Robbinsville H.S., directed by Alison Sussman, one of the 2008 GSA Forum committee members who was so instrumental in organizing her students and producing materials for the event, among many other wonderful contributions she made.

I was actually not surprised by the excellent production of the Laramie Project under her direction. It was a confirmation of her commitment, understanding and sensitivity surrounding the LGBT community at large. What I was surprised about was the quality of the acting of the Raven players. They were very authentic in playing their respective (*cont*)

DONATE

One of the most important things you can do to help is donate funds to **GLSEN Central NJ**.

You will be part of the local organizing efforts of the leading national organization working to ensure safe and effective schools for students.

P.O. Box 261
Hightstown, New Jersey
08520

GLSEN Announces New Day of Action, TransAction!, on Feb. 27

excerpts from GLSEN Press Release

Students and Gay-Straight Alliances across the country participated in *Transgender Day of Remembrance* on Nov. 20 to bring attention to bullying based on gender identity/expression and to memorialize those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice.

GLSEN is a proud supporter of Gender Education and Advocacy's (GEA) Transgender Day of Remembrance, an international day of action to bring awareness to the problem of anti-transgender violence.

Student participation ranges from candle light vigils to school assemblies to transgender-inclusive school trainings to wearing supportive stickers and armbands.

In The 2007 National School Climate Survey released last month, 66.5% of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) students reported being verbally harassed in the past year because of their gender expression. Additionally, 30.4% said they had been physically harassed and 14.2% said they had been physically assaulted because of their gender expression.

In an effort to continue the dialogue started by Transgender Day of Remembrance and further educational efforts surrounding gender identity/expression at school, GLSEN is also proud to announce a new Day of Action, TransAction!, to be held Friday, Feb. 27

With a specific educational focus, TransAction will create an opportunity for students to raise awareness about gender identity/expression and transgender people and promote educational interventions to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all students, regardless of gender identity/expression.

Look for more information in the coming months at www.dayofsilence.org/transaction.html.

GLSEN envisions a future in which every child learns to respect and accept all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

GLSEN & ArnoldNYC Team up with Ad Council for the ThinkB4YouSpeak Campaign

excerpts from GLSEN Press Release

The Advertising Council awarded advertising agency ArnoldNYC its Gold Bell Award for Creative Excellence for developing the "Think Before You Speak" campaign with GLSEN. The campaign topped more than 50 Ad Council campaigns from the past year and was selected by the Campaign Review Committee of leading advertising executives.

The Ad Council's first LGBT-themed campaign, unveiled last month, targets anti-LGBT language among teenagers. It features humorous TV public service announcements that star Hilary Duff and Wanda Sykes interrupting teenagers who use

the term "that's so gay."

Nearly 9 out of 10 of LGBT students (86.3%) experienced harassment at school because of their sexual orientation in the past year, according to GLSEN's 2007 National School Climate Survey.

"We are deeply honored and thrilled that the Ad Council recognized the humorous but powerful campaign creative developed by ArnoldNYC in partnership with GLSEN," said GLSEN Executive Director Dr. Eliza Byard. "We are deeply grateful to the Ad Council, Arnold NYC and the countless others who recognized the need for such a message of respect and tolerance."

The campaign is supported by the interactive website www.ThinkB4YouSpeak.com that allows youth and educators to take action to ensure a safer and more welcoming environment for all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

The campaign has received widespread media coverage, including *The New York Times*, ABC's "The View," "Entertainment Tonight," CNN, ABC's "Good Morning America" and Perez Hilton.com. Bill O'Reilly of FOX News' "The O'Reilly Factor" even referred to Hilary Duff as a patriot for her work on the PSA.



Ally week at **West Windsor-Plainsboro HS South** was a huge success. Everyday, students and teachers wore Ally Week tee shirts, and during lunch we had the Ally Week pledges that people would come sign and then our GSSA members could stick them to the wall (which was covered by the end of the week). I was completely taken

back at how many people came to the table and signed a pledge, and it was not only students; teachers, faculty, and administrators came to sign a pledge and wear an Ally Week shirt. It was heartwarming to see so many people speak up against discrimination, slurs and derogatory language towards GLBT persons, and respect what the Gay Straight Student Alliance stands for; equality for all people.

By Cecilia Jaimes ♦ West Windsor-Plainsboro HS South ♦ GSSA Leader ♦ southgssa@gmail.com

Congratulations to **Delaware Valley Regional High School, Robbinsville High School**, and all high school Gay Straight Alliances that took this opportunity to be visible and invite allies to join in efforts for safe and welcoming schools.

The Laramie Project at Robbinsville H.S. (con't)

roles and had the task of staying in character and remembering all of their lines for a three hour production!! The set and scene transitions were outstanding. I could have easily thought I was watching an Off-Broadway show by the quality of the production. It was especially nice to see some of our Forum GSA students in the play and performing their parts so well. We were fortunate to have seen this wonderful presentation that had so much impact on those of us who saw it. Kudos to all involved in this play.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- [GLSEN CNJ Training Meeting](#) - Sat., Dec. 13, 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. West Windsor Library
- [GLSEN CNJ Board Meeting](#) - Sat., Jan. 10, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. All members welcome to attend. Check <http://www.glsen.org/centralnj> for announcement of location.
- [Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Organizing Weekend](#) - Jan. 16-19. www.dayofsilence.org/mlk.html
- [NNCW Creative Expression Contest entry deadline](#) - Feb. 12 www.nonamecalling.org
- [Bullying and Bias: A Prevention Seminar](#) - Thursday, Feb. 26, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Sponsored by the Ocean County Human Relations Commission, Jersey Shore PFLAG, the Ocean County Library. Speakers are J. Frank Vespa-Papaleo, Esq. and Dr. Paula C. Rodriguez Rust.

GSA Forum a Success

By Carol Watchler

This year's October 18 brought together three hundred participants from 30 schools and community groups. Students, advisors and supporters were greeted by a colorful meeting space flanked by information tables from P-FLAG chapters, the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights, co-sponsors HiTOPS and GLSEN Central NJ, and many others. Popular workshops helping people

work toward safe and welcoming schools included Creating Alliances by Teachers Against Prejudice, Bridges of Respect by the HiTOPS Teen Council, and GLBT History Month 101 by Malcolm Lazin and Christian Fuscarino. Malcolm Lazin, Executive Director of Equality Forum capped the day and evening with an inspiring and information packed keynote featuring work by Equality Forum to highlight October as

GLBT History Month. More can be seen at www.equalityforum.com. Board member Lily McBeth who offered her own workshop on Transgender Role Models summed up the day as a "wonderful event," stating that she saw "high energy, enthusiasm and sharing in the participants. What a marvelous group of kids. I was honored to be a part of this undertaking."

No Name Calling Week: January 26-30

By Carol Watchler

The 2009 No Name Calling Week, slated for January 26-30, once again gives schools a focus on student awareness and efforts to end name-calling and bullying. According to its website,

www.nonamecallingweek.org, No Name-Calling Week is an annual week of educational activities aimed at ending name-calling of all kinds and providing schools with the tools and inspiration to launch an on-going dialogue about ways to eliminate bullying in their communities.

The website provides middle school lessons, elementary lessons, organizing ideas, and tips for involving the entire school as well as information about the Creative Expression Contest which accompanies this event. In the 2009 celebration

of NNCW, the contest deadline has been set for early February, after No Name Calling Week occurs so that activities taking place in classrooms and schools may culminate in submissions to the contest.

Last year's winner of the Creative Expression Contest for school/district wide involvement was New Jersey's Haviland Avenue School in Audubon. Teacher Rich Wilson who has led the NNCW observance for several years explains that "We taught our children to be upstanders rather than bystanders and helped them discern the subtle differences between harmful bullying and the playful teasing that can occur between friends." An outstanding effort to implement the No Name Calling Week mission in Audubon was the

parent/student book club that explored James Howe's *The Misfits*. The experiences of this creative endeavor are detailed in a November, 2007, article in the NJEA Review.

Other winning entries of the contest from past years are included on the website and can serve as great motivation for students to put their learning into words and art.

Materials for NNCW can be downloaded at www.nonamecalling.org or ordered in a kit that comes with a classroom video, binder with lessons and steps for developing a week long observance, stickers and posters. GLSEN CNJ would be available for consultation with educators or teacher training to facilitate implementation of No Name Calling Week.

Board of Directors

Alexandra Lawrence • Lily McBeth • Corrine O'Hara • Paula Rodriguez Rust • Margo Saltzman • Selwa Shamy • Rachel Stine • Carol Watchler • Jack Zatz