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### **CENTER AGAIN PLAYS KEY ROLE IN NO NAME-CALLING WEEK ACTIVITIES THAT CHALLENGE BULLYING AT SCHOOLS**

Kingston, N.Y. – The Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center is once again playing a key organizing role in area observances of “No Name-Calling Week” which takes place this year from January 30 to February 3. Originally established by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), “No Name-Calling Week” is a series of educational activities aimed at ending name-calling of all kinds, and providing schools with the tools and inspiration to launch an ongoing dialogue about ways to eliminate bullying in their communities year-round. The Safe Schools Roundtable, created by the Center in cooperation with GLSEN Hudson Valley, area chapters of the Mental Health Association, Planned Parenthood and PFLAG, and school representatives, has fostered the event in the Mid-Hudson Valley region since 2010.

Among the highlights of the week are proclamations by Ulster County Executive Mike Hein and Orange County Executive Edward Diana; a webcast hosted by Hein for all Ulster County school district students; and a traveling art exhibition, coordinated by the health education staff of Planned Parenthood Mid-Hudson Valley, that provides youth perspectives on ending bullying. The students’ artwork will debut at the Center on Friday, February 3, from 5 to 7 p.m., and subsequently will be shown at the Galleria Mall in Poughkeepsie, and at the Ulster Savings Bank branch in Red Hook.

Initially recognized in a handful of schools, No Name-Calling Week has grown within two years to a regional event in the Mid-Hudson Valley, with more than 85 schools and youth groups hosting events to promote respect, kindness, and no name-calling. While

bullying behavior affects all students, the Center has taken a lead role on these issues because students who are LGBT, or who are perceived to be, are particularly vulnerable. For more information about No Name-Calling Week 2012, call the Center's Project Director, Vanessa Shelmandine, at (845) 331-5300.