

Panelists:

**Alison Gill** - Public Policy Manager, **Gay, Lesbian and Straight Educational Network (GLSEN)**. As a Public Policy Manager at GLSEN, Ms. Gill focuses on state and local policy issues. She provides technical assistance and resources to students, local advocates, partner organizations, and GLSEN Chapters seeking policy change at the state and local level to make schools safer and more respectful for all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

**Samuel Wolfe** - Staff Attorney, **LGBTQ Rights Project, Southern Poverty Law Center**. Mr. Wolfe joined the SPLC in 2010 to launch its LGBTQ Rights Project. Less than 24 hours after the SPLC and NCLR filed suit this March, the Anoka-Hennepin School District in Minnesota restored the rights of two lesbians denied the ability to participate as a couple in a school function. Work continues relating to that school district, which has become a national focal point because of its hostile environment for LGBTQ students. Mr. Wolfe will discuss "Bullied," the documentary and teaching kit about student Jamie Nabozny's groundbreaking lawsuit against his school district for turning a blind eye to the harassment and beatings he endured because he is gay.

**Paula Rosenstein** - Partner, **Rosenstein, Wilson & Dean**. Paula Rosenstein received her undergraduate degree from the University of California at San Diego. She is a graduate of the University Of San Diego School Of Law. Ms. Rosenstein will discuss her role as co-counsel in the Donovan and Ramelli v. Poway Unified School District case in which a San Diego jury found that school officials failed to take appropriate action to protect Megan Donovan and Joey Ramelli from persistent and severe anti-gay harassment while they were students at Poway High School. A \$300,000 settlement was reached on behalf of the plaintiffs.

**John Elliott Eichhorst** - Deputy Regional Attorney, **USDA Office of the General Counsel, Pacific Region**. Mr. Eichhorst's worked with the ACLU of Northern California and the Gay-Straight Alliance and filed suit in the Eastern District of California to address the severe verbal and physical abuse experienced by George Loomis in his high school. The School District ("the District") vigorously defended the case and filed a motion claiming challenging the standing of the GSA to assert claims on behalf of its current and prospective members. The Court issued and published a ruling finding that GSA did have standing and allowed the case to proceed. Upon losing its motion to dismiss, the District became more open to settlement discussions and Mr. Eichhorst and his legal team were able to negotiate a consent decree requiring the District to adopt sweeping reforms to address the anti-gay harassment.

**Matt Nosanchuk** - Senior Counselor to the Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division. Matt Nosanchuk will discuss the out-of-court settlement in the matter of *J.L. v. Mohawk Central School District*, a lawsuit which the United States sought to join to address alleged violations of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, both of which prohibit discrimination based on sex, including discrimination based on gender stereotypes. Student, J.L., was the alleged victim of severe and pervasive student-on-student harassment based on sex because, based on the United States' motion, J.L. failed to conform to gender stereotypes in both behavior and experience. The United States further alleged that the Mohawk Central School District had knowledge of the harassment, that the school district was deliberately indifferent in its failure to take timely, corrective action, and the deliberate indifference restricted J.L.'s ability to fully enjoy the educational opportunities and benefits of his school. The district denied these allegations, but a settlement was reached, which requires the Mohawk School District to take corrective action.