

# Student Courage Awards

**T**he Siena College Martin Luther King, Jr., and Coretta Scott King Lecture

Series on Race and Nonviolent Social Change Advisory Board announced the recipients of the 2009 Student Courage Award.

The Courage Award was established to recognize young people from grades 6-12 in the Capital Region, who have demonstrated personal courage by taking positive action against racism, prejudice, bias-related violence, and other forms of intolerance in their respective communities. The award was developed in response to an increase in intolerance, bullying, gangs and racial discrimination among youth in the Capital Region. Schools, youth groups, and religious organizations from the region were contacted to submit nominations for the award. A Selection Committee comprised of interested government, business and civic leaders selected the winners based on the contributions of the nominees to addressing intolerance in any form.

First-place goes to **Gabriella Marsh**, a junior from Schenectady, New York, who attends Schalmont High School. Gabriella is a member of the Diversity Club and took the initiative to become a study circles facilitator for the Schenectady County Embraces Diversity (SCED) program. In addition to her own participation, Gabriella has inspired other students to get involved. She is a true leader promoting issues of tolerance and diversity in her school.

The runner up is **Aaron Sedgwick**, an eighth-grader from New Lebanon, New York, who attends New Lebanon Jr/Sr High School. Aaron is a quiet leader who takes action when a wrong or unjust practice is being committed against another student. He is described as a big brother to many of his classmates especially when the class works on project activities. He keeps a watchful eye on all and provides assistance to many. In one instance last year, Aaron stood up to a bully at his school and stopped the harassment of a fellow student. This non-violent intervention demonstrates Aaron's courage and leadership in his community.

Third-place went to **Paige Tutt**, a senior from East Greenbush, New York, who attends Columbia High School. Paige has followed a rigorous academic program combined with an involvement in extra-curricular activities that reflects true peer leadership, and a strong desire to improve her school and community. Paige engages others to be their best with a conviction that inspires. Her work has been recognized by the YMCA, the State University of New York and Albany Medical College.

*We are especially thankful to Alice P. Green, Ph.D. and Charles L. Touhey  
for their annual sponsorship of the Student Courage Award.*