

# What is UPSTANDER DAY?

## **What it is:**

County Executive Andy Spano has officially declared May 18, 2006, as Upstander Day. This special day is meant to encourage student activism and awareness by inspiring students to become “upstanders” (rather than bystanders) -- and to take an active role in changing the world. It is a call to action for participating schools to get their communities involved by hosting an event to bring attention to a particular human rights issue.

## **how it began:**

The idea was born when a group of teachers who serve on the Educators Planning Committee of the Westchester Holocaust Education Center (WHEC) decided that there should be a day for students to actively get their schools and communities involved in human rights awareness. Then, the WHEC incorporated the plan into its fifth annual Human Rights Institute for High School Student Leaders, which drew over 200 students from 22 area high schools on March 15. There, the students learned about the genocide currently taking place in Darfur, Sudan, from Rebecca Hamilton, founder of the Darfur Action Group at Harvard Law School. They also got together in workshops to discuss what they and their schools could do to bring attention to the Darfur genocide and other pressing human rights issues.

## **who's taking part:**

22 schools throughout Westchester County have been planning events since the student institute on March 15. All of these schools will be holding events on Upstander Day.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN UPSTANDER DAY.**

For more information about the WHEC, please call 914-696-0738

or visit [www.holocausteducationctr.org](http://www.holocausteducationctr.org).