

September 19, 2005
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**MEDIA ALERT FOR CALENDAR LISTINGS
AND ASSIGNMENT DESKS**

**GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY CENTER
PLANNED FOR ULSTER COUNTY**

**COMMUNITY-WIDE FORUM TO DISCUSS PROJECT
SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 25
AT KINGSTON CITY HALL**

KINGSTON, NEW YORK -- A community forum will be held on Tuesday, October 25 at the City Hall in Kingston, to discuss the proposed project to establish a lesbian and gay community center in Kingston. The event will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the main chamber of City Hall. All are welcome.

The forum is being called by the Community Center committee, a group of local residents who organized the first New Paltz Pride March and Festival this past June. More than one thousand people attended this historic event. The committee will make a presentation of their achievements thus far on the project and announce upcoming events.

"Ulster County has proven itself a place which offers compassion for all people," explained Ginny Apuzzo, chair of the Community Center Committee. "But there is still more work to do. We must ensure that gay and lesbian and gay taxpayers have the same access to social services, education and culture as everyone else, especially now that we are under fire by this White House administration. A Community Center will help achieve that equality for our lesbian and gay friends and neighbors."

Statistics have shown that gays and lesbians are traditionally overlooked or undeserved by existing social services used by their straight counterparts. This lack of support poses serious problems, especially for gay teens who face suicide rates three times the average of teens. The Ulster County Community Center would provide specific resources not currently available, as well as cultural and educational opportunities not found in Ulster County schools.

ATTENTION MEDIA: You are invited to attend the Oct. 25 Kingston City Hall community forum. For advance interviews, please contact Committee Chair Ginny Apuzzo at (845) 339-7963.