

JAMIE NABOZNY

b. October 14, 1975

YOUTH ACTIVIST

“Kids are becoming a lot stronger, and with my case I hope they realize that they’re not alone.”

Jamie Nabozny was the first student to successfully sue a school district for its failure to protect a student from anti-gay harassment. His 1995 lawsuit helped pioneer the Safe Schools Movement for GLBT students.

Nabozny was emotionally bullied and physically abused as a high school student in Ashland, Wisconsin, after he revealed his sexual orientation. Classmates urinated on him, simulated raping him and beat him to the point that he needed surgery. Although he and his parents reported the bullying repeatedly, Nabozny was told that, because he was openly gay, he should expect such behavior.

“I was numb most of the time, and I had to be numb to make it through,” Nabozny says. He left the school, moved to Minnesota with his family, and passed the GED exam.

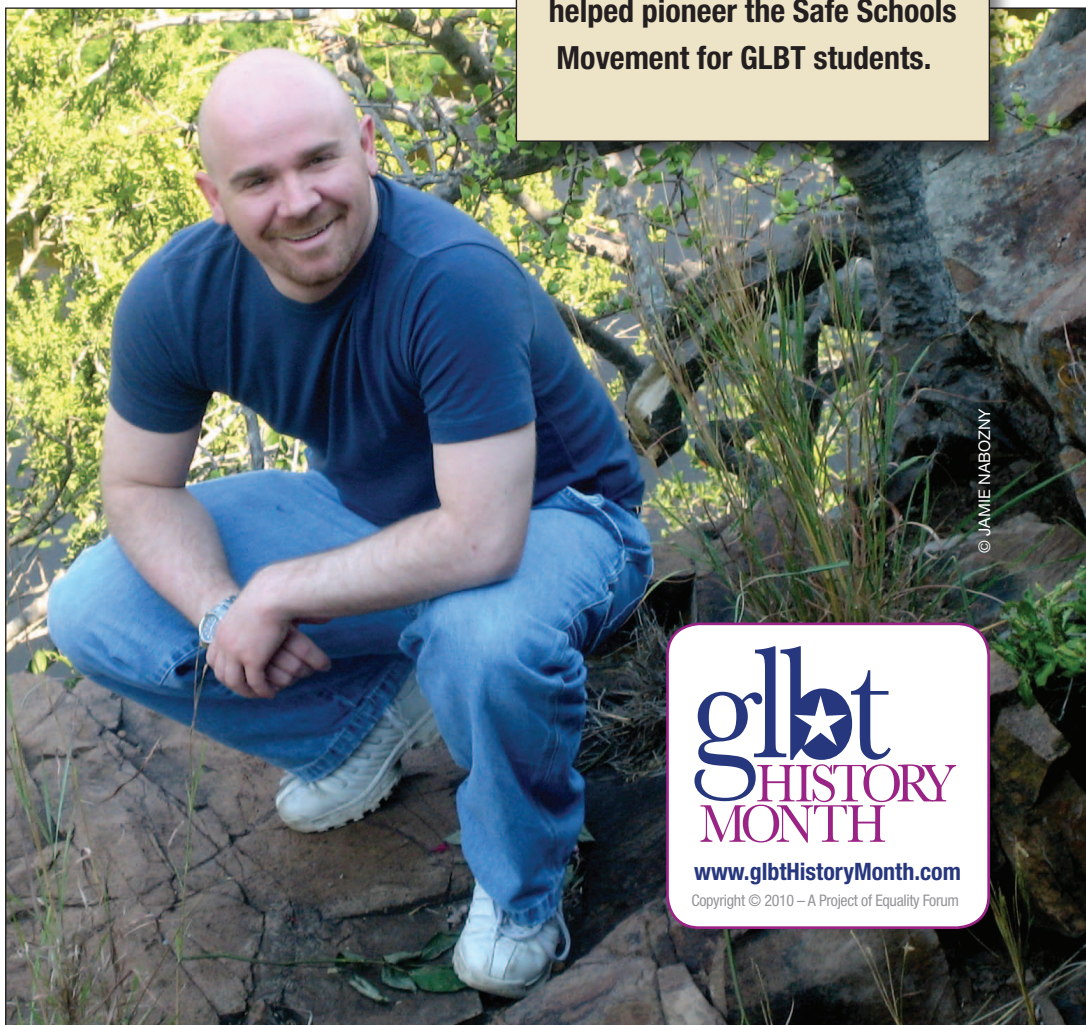
His lawsuit against the school was initially dismissed, but the Nabozny family appealed. The appellate court, basing its ruling on the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution, allowed the lawsuit to go forward. A jury then found the school liable for Nabozny’s injuries; the school district eventually agreed to a nearly \$1 million settlement.

Nabozny’s story is featured in a documentary film and teaching kit produced by the Southern Poverty Law Center. “Bullied: A Student, a School and a Case that Made History” and its accompanying materials have been distributed to schools nationwide.

Nabozny has submitted written testimony to Congress and has lobbied lawmakers about school safety for GLBT youth. He was honored for his pioneering efforts by Equality Forum, which recognized him with its 1997 National Role Model Award.

Nabozny lives in Minneapolis. He travels the country speaking to diverse audiences about his experience and the importance of safe schools.

Jamie Nabozny’s 1995 lawsuit against his school district helped pioneer the Safe Schools Movement for GLBT students.



g**l**bt
HISTORY
MONTH

www.glbthistorymonth.com

Copyright © 2010 – A Project of Equality Forum