



## Casey McMillan

**Teacher** LaVern Haakanson **School** Austin E. Lathrop High School | Fairbanks, Alaska

**Issue** My class chose to tackle the problem of homophobia in Alaska.

**Project Description** Originally we wanted to legalize gay marriage in Alaska, but we soon realized that this goal was too far out of reach for a month and a half long project. So with that in mind, we searched for another solution to everyday homophobia. We soon realized that our school wasn't necessarily a welcoming place for gay and lesbian students and that we could change that. The solution we finally settled on was creating a gay-straight alliance club at Tanana Middle School (the school I was attending at the time of the project). We talked to West Valley High School about their gay-straight alliance club and got information that would help us make a successful club. Our class also talked to our principal to see if we could get permission to start the club.

**Project Outcome** Unfortunately, a gay-straight alliance club was never formed, because the project was started a few months before the end of the school year and the class that did the project was going on to high school. Although the club wasn't formed it started a conversation within the 8th grade class about equal rights, what it means to love another human being, and what the outcome of that love could be.

**Request** I would like to know where they stand on gay marriage and why. I would also like to know if they see Alaska legalizing gay marriage anytime in the near future.