

**VALLO TRANSPORTATION HOSTS SPECIAL BULLYING PREVENTION PRESENTATION AT JHS 194 IN WHITESTONE FEATURING NATIONAL ANTI-BULLYING SPEAKER TOM THELEN**

**Council Member Paul Vallone Joins Vallo Transportation in this Effort & Presents a Proclamation to the Company to Commemorate the Fifth Anniversary of Promoting this Important Awareness Campaign**



**Pictured with JHS 194 students are (l to r): Elizabeth Yarmy, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Dean; Motivational Speaker Tom Thelen; Council Member Paul A. Vallone; and Linda DeSabato, President, Vallo Transportation.**

Photo Credit: Joe Connor Photography

Whitestone, NY – November 14, 2017 – **Vallo Transportation** promoted their fifth annual anti-bullying awareness campaign entitled **No Bullying Zone**. To celebrate this milestone anniversary, the company increased outreach efforts in the community and hosted a special bullying prevention presentation at JHS 194 in Whitestone. The presentation featured national anti-bullying speaker Tom Thelen.

Tom Thelen is a youth motivational speaker, author and founder of the Victimproof Bullying Prevention Program, a curriculum that helps kids speak up to bullying and become a positive influence at their school. "A new study by the U.S. Department of Education shows that 30% of sixth graders experience bullying on a regular basis," said Tom Thelen "And by the time they reach 12<sup>th</sup> grade, that number is reduced to 15%, which is still way too high," he said. "If we're ever going to reduce bullying, we have to give kids practical skills for how to handle it and how to get help."

During the event, Council Member Paul Vallone presented Vallo Transportation with a Proclamation acknowledging the company for successfully creating awareness of bullying prevention and highlighting the beneficial resources found at [www.StopBullying.gov](http://www.StopBullying.gov) throughout the community. "Bullying in schools has been and continues to be a serious issue that has damaged, often irrevocably, the lives of so many

children and their families. Awareness and education are critical tools in addressing the issue," said Council Member Paul Vallone. "I'm proud to join Vallo Transportation and motivational speaker Tom Thelen for this educational event to combat bullying and foster an atmosphere of respect among students. Vallo has been a leader and taken great initiative on this issue and I was happy to present them with a proclamation in recognition of their work. I look forward to continuing our partnership for years to come."

Nearly 1,000 students from JHS 194 participated in this special presentation. Bullying prevention is a topic the school promotes regularly. This event helped reinforce their message of promoting a non-bullying environment.

Vallo Transportation's outreach effort more than doubled this year by distributing thousands of anti-bullying materials in the community – the focal point being connecting with students. Special bookmarks and silicone wristbands are given to students, both of which are encouraged to be used and worn during the entire school year. The bookmarks include a pledge that asks students to: *respect each other, refrain from bullying behavior and speak up to help a classmate if he or she is being bullied*. The campaign is designed to highlight the resources available through [www.StopBullying.gov](http://www.StopBullying.gov), a comprehensive website with student, parent and educator portals that include targeted facts, information and resources regarding bullying and cyberbullying.

"As we commemorate five years of implementing this anti-bullying campaign, I'm proud to announce that to date we've delivered this important message to over 10,000 students and members of the community," said Linda DeSabato, President, Vallo Transportation. "It's a huge accomplishment and we're so grateful for the support we've received over the years. Our plan is to continue raising awareness of bullying prevention among students, and we will continue to partner with the education community, elected officials, law enforcement and other groups on outreach initiatives."

More information about Vallo Transportation's anti-bullying initiative can be found on their website at [www.ValloTransportation.com](http://www.ValloTransportation.com).

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### **About Vallo Transportation**

Vallo Transportation provides school-bus service for hundreds of children in Queens and Manhattan, N.Y. The company, which specializes in service to the Bronx High School of Science, also provides charter service for field trips, community groups, high school sports and special events. Vallo has an outstanding safety record, on-time performance of nearly 98 percent, superior maintenance and training programs and history of community involvement. This outstanding reputation earned Vallo the New York State Bus Contractors Association's Contractor of the Year Award in 2010. Vallo traces its origins back more than 50 years to the hard work and dedication of Eddie and Tony Vallone, the founders of Parkway Bus Service, which provided transportation services to New York City school children. Parkway merged with two other companies, Columbia Bus Service and Syken Coach Services, to form Pioneer Bus Corporation in 1954. Pioneer grew to provide commuter bus services, in addition to its core school bus service. By the 1970s, Pioneer was one of the largest privately held bus companies in New York. Ed Vallone's children and grandchildren continue the tradition of excellence by serving a new generation of passengers. More information about Vallo Transportation Ltd. and its services is available at [www.vallotransportation.com](http://www.vallotransportation.com) or by calling [\(718\) 961-7600](tel:7189617600).

### **About Tom Thelen**

As one of America's top youth motivational speakers, Tom Thelen has spoken at over 500 schools, colleges, and youth organizations. His message helps schools create a positive culture and shows students how to "be the change." Thelen has been featured on FOX, CBS, PBS, The National Association of Student Councils, The National Honor Society, as well as Student Conferences for 4-H, FFA, FCCLA, and YMCA. Visit [www.TomThelen.com](http://www.TomThelen.com) to learn more.