

GroundSpark

Women's Educational Media became GroundSpark on October 1st. The thirty-year old non-profit creates visionary documentary films and dynamic educational campaigns that move individuals and communities to take action for a more just world. In the last few months our films *That's a Family!* and *It's Elementary* have been in the news for the powerful role they are playing in igniting important public dialogue about how schools address issues of gender, sexual orientation, and family diversity with their students. Recent stories in *New York Times*, *The Advocate*, *Bay Windows*, and the *New York Blade* reflect this recent flurry of discussion. Ed Vitagliano of the conservative American Family Association was actually quoted saying that he thought that the battle to keep LGBT issues out of the schools has been lost. "My hat is off to Debra Chasnoff [GroundSpark's executive director]," Vitagliano said. "They've had tremendous success with it [*It's Elementary*]." *It's Elementary* is being re-released on DVD with a companion documentary, *It's STILL Elementary*, that goes back to find some of the students who were in the original film to find out what difference it makes to have elementary school teachers who discuss LGBT people in the classroom. Brandon Rice (in photo) was one of them. Originally filmed in fifth grade talking about how people made fun of him for "acting like a girl", today he is happy to be an out gay man and says "It was soothing to hear teachers let me know that it's okay to be yourself and it's okay to have feelings for the same sex."