Dear SUNY New Paltz College Council,

We strongly support the SUNY New Paltz Diversity and Inclusion Council recommendation that the Hasbrouck Complex buildings should be renamed. Following the D & I’s thorough research and convening of a broad community conversation on the topic, it is clear that this is the right thing to do.

We stand with the SUNY New Paltz D & I Council, President Christian, the many campus administrators, staff, and faculty across campus, including the History Department, the Faculty Senate, the United University Professions union, the Campus Auxiliary Services (CAS) board, and especially the New Paltz Student Association and the many, many students who for the past several years have shared their perspectives and informed us about the real impacts of these names on their daily lives. We stand with who all have voiced their strong support for removing the Huguenot patentee names from these residential buildings.

We reject the contention that to change these names would be “erasing history,” and we, as white people, wholeheartedly agree with President Christian’s analysis that “Such thinking shifts the focus of discrimination away from those who have suffered under it, and creates a narrative used to defend a status quo that is harmful. We cannot meet our mission if we view seeking truth and enriching our understanding of each other as a loss.”

We believe this moment in time provides an excellent opportunity to reveal and be more truthful about our history. The recommendations for a “contemplative space” aligned with curriculum and new interior signage in these dorms with more depth and information provided will actually do a much better job of educating students and our community about our past. Renaming the dorms is right educationally and will definitely be more reflective of our contemporary community values.
Thank you for considering our statement as you deliberate over this important decision.

KT Tobin and Tim Rogers
Deputy Mayor and Mayor of the Village of New Paltz
(an alum and the son of alumni)