

Understanding Disabilities, Inc.
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April 1, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TWO-TIME OLYMPIAN TO SPEAK IN READING ON LEARNING DISABILITIES AND SELF-ESTEEM

Though she has a tremendous list of athletic accomplishments, Molly Sullivan Sliney views her college diploma as one of her greatest achievements.

When Molly was nine years old, she studied long and hard to prepare for her class spelling bee. When her turn came to spell in front of the class, she was given the easiest word on the list. She went to the front of the room. And she spelled it incorrectly. As she headed back to her seat, she heard students whisper belittling comments. As Molly tells it now, “Then I made a very big mistake: I began to believe what they’d said. And then I made an even bigger mistake: I began to give up.”

Molly was diagnosed with severe dyslexia at the age of 6. With this learning disability came huge challenges to her self-esteem. Fortunately, her story does not end with giving up. In fact, Molly went on to meet a teacher who introduced her to the sport of fencing, and a fencing coach, Joe Pechinsky, who inspired her to believe she could do anything she put her mind to.

Encouraged by Coach Pechinsky and her parents, Molly decided to believe in herself. She went on to attend the University of Notre Dame on a full scholarship, as well as become a two-time Olympic fencer. By sharing her life experiences, she teaches youth to believe in

themselves, to set goals and to work every day to achieve those goals, no matter what the obstacles.

Miss Sliney will talk with us about her challenges with dyslexia, and just as importantly about the universal issue of SELF ESTEEM.

Molly will tell her moving and dramatic story in Reading on Thursday, April 9th at 7:00 pm at the Endsloew Performing Arts Center at Reading Memorial High School. Understanding Disabilities, Inc. is sponsoring this special presentation, with generous support from private donors and the Reading Education Foundation.

This community presentation is open to the public, and admission is free. In honor of Understanding Disabilities' 30th anniversary celebration this year, a cookies and punch reception will follow the presentation.

Understanding Disabilities (UD) is a non-profit organization that has provided disability awareness programming in the Reading Public Schools for 30 years. UD's goal is to teach children to see beyond people's disabilities and to focus on the ways we're all the same inside. For more information on Ms. Sliney's presentation or on Understanding Disabilities, contact Priscilla Squires at info@understandingdisabilities.org.