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TEACHING LIFE SKILLS

Chalsty takes on bullies

It takes a great deal of courage to get over some of the agonizing hurts we experience as adolescents, but Jill Siegal Chalsty not only faced the bully who had made her life miserable in high school, she turned the experience into a quest to help others.



Chalsty

Chalsty recently shared her story with the Middle and Upper School students at Charleston Collegiate School as part of the school's "Making a Difference" speaker's series.

After Chalsty met her childhood tormentor at her 10-year high school reunion in California, she undertook a year-long research project to dis-

cover how young people can avoid the kind of pain she had suffered. She interviewed students, local business owners, teachers, parents and administrators. A common theme emerged: students lacked the life skills that enabled them to lead successful lives.

With a background in film and television, Chalsty marshaled the support of local and national community leaders, including HUD Secretary Jack Kemp. In 1992, she launched a nonprofit educational reform organization, the Community for Education Foundation, whose Overcoming Obstacles program offers educators curriculum materials and training so they may teach relevant life skills to their students.

Charleston Collegiate hopes to be the first in the area to utilize the program.