

Dan Occhiogrosso

Dan practiced his basketball skills which led him to see that he could eventually play basketball for something bigger than himself. His innovative presentation, Create the Crossover, boosts self-confidence of students to help them reach their dreams and inspires them to have a greater respect for themselves and for others. Dan has also raised funds and awareness for South African orphans and has shared his inspirational story in schools and communities around the world.

Topics Include

**Substance Abuse Prevention • Anti-Bullying • Physical Fitness
Goal Setting / Achieving Dreams • Resisting Peer Pressure
Self-esteem Enhancement**



Biography

Dan Occhiogrosso took a simple challenge in the seventh grade from a successful college basketball coach that changed his life forever: practice your dribbling for five minutes a day. Accepting that challenge not only helped him become an incredible ball-handler, it also led him see that he could play basketball for something bigger than himself. After playing four years of high school basketball at Hackensack Christian Schools in New Jersey, “Occh” went off to play four years of college basketball at Baptist Bible College in Clarks Summit, PA. Through both great success and failure he simply continued to dream about using basketball to accomplish something big in the world.

Two years after graduating college, Occh became burdened with how many people AIDS was killing in Sub-Saharan Africa and how many orphans these young parents were leaving behind. But how could Occh’s basketball abilities do anything to help these children? He decided to dribble the 2007 New York City Marathon with a basketball to raise funds and awareness for friends who were rescuing these orphans in South Africa. Occh’s efforts then began to inspire his friends across the country to dribble running events to raise even more help for people in poverty around the world.

One month after completing the marathon, Occh put his dribbling skills to music for a faculty talent show at the high school where he was working. This led to forming Create the Crossover, a presentation he has now done in schools and communities around the world. Besides being a motivational speaker Dan is a substitute teacher and coaches tennis and basketball at Memorial High School in West New York, New Jersey. He dreams of one day teaching English or Italian in an urban high school after his days of dribbling basketballs are over.

Testimonials

“I just wanted to thank you again for coming yesterday. The feedback that was received from the kids and teachers was amazing! You really were engaging to the students and are an amazing role model!” – *Danielle Leva, Student Assistant Coordinator and Middle School Anti-Bullying Specialist, Elmwood Park Memorial Middle/High School*

“I just wanted to thank you so much for yesterday’s assemblies. I was really upset I wasn’t able to stay because I really enjoyed your presentation at the SAC conference. I was able to speak to the Principal and the Assistant Principal and they were both thrilled with how it went. The principal pointed out how much he appreciated the fact that you tailored the 2 assemblies to the specific grade levels and how well you kept everyone’s attention. The Assistant Principal just told me he personally felt like he got a lot out of it and mentioned he would be reaching out to me about possibly suggesting it for his own kids’ schools. Thank you again for everything and keep up the great work! We need amazing speakers like you.”

– *Mairin Schramm, SAC, Hammonton Public Schools,*

“Dan Occhiogrosso was not only a great speaker, but an individual who was able to inspire over 600 Freshmen to become the men and women they know they can be. His basketball skills are second only to his powerful and inspirational message of hope and faith.” – *Martin Gurczeski, Freshmen Class Advisor, Bayonne High School, Bayonne, N.J.*