

RYAN SALLANS

PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER
TRANS MENTOR
DIVERSITY TRAINER
CONSULTANT



RYAN SALLANS

“In 2005, I began my transition so that my physical body matched my gender identity. I’m what some call a post-op FtM transsexual, which means I’ve completed all surgeries.”

Born in a small town in rural Nebraska in 1979, Kimberly Ann was a surprise to her parents who were expecting a boy. Kim’s parents relied on an old Irish Wives’ tale to predict the sex of their baby; a needle hanging from a thread that pointed downward implying they were going to have a boy. However, the boy they thought they had cleverly predicted came out a girl, and thus the name they picked out was changed to suit the sex of their baby.



Kim was not your average little girl. She had no interest in playing with dolls or wearing dresses and by age three, it was clear to all that Kim was a tomboy. She took joy in wearing overalls and following her father around the farm and doing “man’s” work while her mother constantly scrubbed the grass stains out of her jeans and repeatedly patched the holes in her worn out knees.

Kim wanted to be a boy but knew it wasn’t possible so she pushed that desire deep down inside her. Unfortunately, as Kim dismissed her desire to be a boy, she developed deeper issues within herself as she grew into adolescence. She

scrutinized her body and hated how she looked. By age 19 she developed an eating disorder, which deteriorated her physical appearance. To her, this deterioration made her look more like a boy, as she lost her curves and her breasts got smaller, but to her doctor, it was Anorexia and it could kill her. For the next six years Kim battled eating disorders. When her body returned to a healthy weight her feminine curves came back and Kim desperately wanted those curves to go away. She began to exercise obsessively in hopes of developing a fit, tight masculine body, with defined muscles and zero body fat. Unfortunately for Kim, it didn’t work and she felt confined in a body that was fighting against her. She began to make herself sick in order to rid her body of those curves she disliked so much, thus becoming Bulimic.



It wasn’t until a therapy session in 2003 that she realized there was something else causing her illness- she was gay. She had suppressed her crushes on girls because she was scared of what people would say. In 2004 Kim came out into the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community with the help of a friend. A month later, she met her first partner, Michelle, who would stand by her side for the next several years. Kim was happy with Michelle, and when things got sexual it was exciting yet terrifying because she still felt uncomfortable in her body and ashamed of how she felt. *“My outside didn’t match my inside”*.

In December 2004, Kim had a breakthrough. While perusing books in a bookstore, she found herself looking at the transgender/transsexual section of books. Her partner was confused by her interest in these books, but Kim still purchased a few and took them home to read. After reading the books, researching on the internet, and consulting with others in transgender chat groups, Kim realized that what she desired all her life was really possible in attaining. Finally, Kim could be the boy she always felt she was. After careful consideration, she decided to have top surgery to remove her breasts, and begin hormone therapy. Thus began her journey into her transformation. It was a difficult journey, an on-going journey; her partner didn’t understand, her family was confused and hurt, but Kim knew that she would never be truly happy until she was truly herself- or HIMself.

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On May 6, 2005, Kim had chest surgery. By June she started testosterone therapy. On July 8, 2005, Kim ceased to exist and Ryan Sallans was born. Kim's name was legally changed to Ryan Sallans and all government documents including birth certificate, social security, driver's license, etc., were changed as well. In August 15, 2006, Ryan had a hysterectomy and in May of 2008, completed his bottom surgery in Belgrade, Serbia.

Since Ryan's journey began, he has documented every step. He wanted to share with others in the transgender community and give them someone to turn to during their own self-realizations. In addition to blogging and keeping a public diary, Ryan videotaped and photographed the changes he went through during each stage of testosterone therapy and surgeries. His story was shown on the LOGO network's documentary *Gender Rebel* and he has appeared twice on Larry King Live.

After over nine years as a Sexuality Health Educator for Planned Parenthood and the University of Nebraska combined, Ryan Sallans is now a full-time Public Speaker and expert in the transgender community who delivers speeches to thousands nationwide to provide insight on gender identity while using humor to take the edge off on the intricate clinical details of his story. His goal is to reach out to everyone, not just those within the transgender community, to educate, enlighten, and tackle the questions that most trans persons consider too private to discuss. Ryan is also dedicated to helping those with eating disorders better understand their problems by sharing his own experience with Anorexia and Bulimia. He completed his education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a BA in Anthropology and English, an MA in English, and an MA in Educational Psychology (Human Health Behaviors). He also worked as a Health Educator for a non-profit agency for many years before moving into diversity training and consulting.



RYAN SALLANS

MEDIA APPEARANCES

[LOGO TV Documentary- GENDER REBEL](#)



[LARRY KING LIVE](#)



CLIPPINGS

[Ryan Sallans is Writing a New Book about His Life](#)

[Transgender Activist Seeks Acceptance for His Community](#)

[I Beat Anorexia by Becoming a Man](#)

[Nebraskan Likes Being a Man](#)

[Kansas State Nays then OKs Trans Speaker](#)

[Transgender Speaker Denied Funding at Salina Campus](#)

OTHER

www.ryansallans.com

www.ryansallans.wordpress.com

www.youtube.com/ryescout01

[Ryan on Facebook](#)

RYAN SALLANS

Q& A

Q: How do you identify yourself?

Ryan: I identify myself differently depending on what role I am playing in the community. For the most part I simply identify as Ryan, a guy from the Midwest, with two dogs, and a girlfriend. If I am doing work specifically geared toward gender identity/expression then I identify as Ryan, a queer transman.

Q: What are the most common things people want to know about you?

Ryan: The first one, ALWAYS, is what I have between my legs.... I think this is because we are so repressed when it comes to sexuality that we go to the most basic questions. If people are able to move past that question then they want to know just what the transition process was like and how I dealt with family, surgeries, finances, etc. They are also very curious to know if I am single or not.

Q: Why talk to you??

Ryan: Even prior to my transition I was a professional speaker and sexuality educator. I am a seasoned transman who has traveled the world, spoken with diverse communities and am in a place where I can talk about my own process but also see and explain the other diverse identities in the transgender community. I have an ability to de-escalate situations that could bring conflict to a group.

Q: What topics do you tackle when you are speaking in front of an audience?

Ryan: When I give a talk related to gender identity and expression I first do an overview of transgender as an identity and the differences between, sex, gender, and orientation. I then describe the different aspects of the transition process: medical, legal, social, and hormonal. After getting the audience into the mindset of understanding the transition process I open up about my own transition and give audiences my story through humor and candor.

Q: Do you welcome any type of question? Is anything off limits?

Ryan: I welcome any question a person has and I will answer it. I believe, as an educator, it is important to address all curiosities that audience members have and being a sexuality educator has made me very comfortable with personal questions. However, I always remind my audiences that even though I am comfortable with any question, that doesn't mean other people in the transgender community are willing or wanting to share intimate details about their lives.

Q: Why is it important to educate non-transgender individuals?

Ryan: It is important to give a rounded perspective of the transgender community to non-transgender individuals because it helps explain the complexities that intertwine humans and sexuality. It also helps decrease the myths that run so rampant surrounding transgender individuals and their bodies. I find that people often are more open to their own internal struggles when they start to explore the experiences that people in the transgender community face.

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Q& A cont.

Q: What are misconceptions about you and how do you address them?

Ryan: Misconceptions related to my identity and me as a person are different depending on who you are talking to. There are some people in the transgender community that are upset by the national presence I have had on TV due to the fact that I display a white male that by appearance fits into the hetero-normative category or “over-simplified”. An example of this misconception was a comment posted on this blog: <http://midwestgenderqueer.com/index.php/archives/460>, which I replied to via the blog and via a youtube video. When I am brought up against these misconceptions, I do not attack or defend, but rather, I rationalize and make apparent that we all have different aspects of our identity and I personally honor those of others like I do my own.

Q: What was your biggest challenge during your transition?

Ryan: There were, and still are, several challenges during my transition so it is hard to narrow it down to just one area. If I would have to pick one it would be trying to find acceptance and feeling loved by family. In order for me to move forward, I had to push the idea out of my head that my family would ever be there for me and visualize being all alone. I decided that if I could face hard times alone, then having others support me would just strengthen my journey.

Q: What advice can you offer other transgender individuals?

Ryan: The best advice I can offer anyone is to be true to your own feelings and not let other’s opinions/ views affect what you feel is truly best for your body, health, and life goals. When you start to feel frustrated, don’t give up because there are plenty of resources out there to help you. You just need to reach out and ask for the help.

Q: If you could do it all again, would you?

Ryan: I would. I have no regrets. I love my life, my job, the people I meet and the challenges that I have overcome. I have a lot of challenges still ahead but I’ve learned just to take each step at a time.



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"Ryan is a remarkable individual. He's brave, articulate, and has a candid sense of humor"

-Larry King

"Ryan Sallans is a thoughtful, knowledgeable and authentic presenter. He puts any audience at ease with his grace and humor. He is a true expert in his field with a real ability to connect and inform. I encourage you to book him - you won't regret it!"

- Abby Swatsworth, Director of Development, CenterPointe

"One of the most raw and honest presentations I've ever had the pleasure to learn from. Insightful and humorous, Ryan takes us on a journey of awareness and growth. One of my favorite things about hearing Ryan speak is the fact that he encourages questions and is so open in answering and sharing."

-Jane Glaubius, Organizer, Nebraska Wesleyan University Plains Pride GSA

"Ryan is Awesome & Inspiring! I'm so thankful he has spoken at my campus!"

-LaTierra Piphus, Student, University of Wisconsin-Parkside

"Ryan Sallans has been to our campus many times. Each time we learn something new and exciting about the community we have here. Ryan is insightful and open to questions. As a speaker he makes you feel comfortable and able to be yourself while learning about his personal journey."

-Kathryn A. Evans, Student, University of Wisconsin-Parkside

"I have heard Ryan speak. I find him to be grounded in his knowledge of human relations. His sense of humor comes in windy and refreshing. He stands alone in his demeanor as an advocate of the transgender community"

-Ellen (Mother of Transgender child)

"Thank you, Ryan for the speech you gave. My cousin is bisexual and I didn't think she was OK or cool because of what she was but you made me realize that it shouldn't matter and after 4 years of not talking to her I called her and told her I loved her even if she is bisexual!! Thank you so much for coming and opening my eyes to see that what my cousin is, isn't bad. I really appreciate so it so much. Hope you can drop by again and just hang out. Again, thank you so much for coming hope you have a nice day!!"

-Stephanie, High School Student



RYAN SALLANS

Trainings, Consulting & Conferences

Doane College
Crete, Nebraska
April 21, 2011 - Presenter

Child Welfare Conference
Kearney, Nebraska
April 15, 2011 - Presenter

Lincoln Public Schools -Equity Diversity
Group
Lincoln, Nebraska
April 14, 2011 - Trainer

University of North Carolina-Wilmington
April 12-13, 2011 - Keynote Speaker

Warren-Wilson College
North Carolina
April 11, 2011 - Keynote Speaker

Affiliates Risk Management
Services, INC.
New York, NY
2011 - Consultant-LGBTQ
Health Care Modules

CSG Systems Inc
Omaha, NE
2011 - Consultant-Transitioning
in the Workplace

University of Nebraska-Kearney
Kearney, NE
2011 - Keynote Speaker

University of Georgia-Athens
Athens, Georgia
2010 - Keynote Speaker

University of Wisconsin-Parkside
Kenosha, WI
2010 - Keynote Speaker

Planned Parenthood of the
Heartland
Lincoln, NE
2009 - All-Staff Training-
LGBTQ Cultural Comp.

Kansas State University - Salina
Salina, KS
2009 - Keynote Speaker

State University of New
York-Oswego
Oswego, NY
2009 - Keynote Speaker

FutureNET Family Planning
Conference
Des Moines, IA
2009 - Presenter

Gender Odyssey Conference
Seattle, WA
2009 - Presenter
Philadelphia 8th Annual
Trans-Health Conference
Philadelphia, PA
2009 - Presenter

Nebraska Chapter of Social
Worker's Conference
LaVista, NE
2008 - Presenter
Drawing Water from a
Deeper Well Conference
Indianapolis, Indiana
2008 -Co-presenter

6th Annual HIV/AIDS &
STD Conference
Kansas City, MO
2008 - Presenter
10th Annual Colorado
Goldrush Conference
Denver, CO
2008 - Keynote Speaker

BryanLGH East Community
Education Seminar
Lincoln, NE
2007 - Panelist

Planned Parenthood
Federation of America
National
2007 - Audio-Conference
Call Presenter

Nebraska Chapter of Social
Worker's Conference
Omaha, NE
2007 - Presenter

FutureNET Family Planning
Conference
Ames, IA
2007 - Presenter

Gender Odyssey
Conference
Seattle, WA
2007 - Presenter

Nebraska Wesleyan
Transgender Awareness
Week
Lincoln, NE
2007 - Presenter

Forge Forward
Conference
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
2007 - Presenter

Bowling Green State
University
Columbus, Ohio
2007 - Keynote Speaker

Southeast Community
College
Lincoln, NE
2007 - Presenter

Creighton University
Omaha, NE
2007 - Panelist

Bellevue University
Bellevue, NE
2007 - Presenter

National Gay and Lesbian
Creating Change
Conference Kansas City,
MO
2006 - Presenter

PFLAG Better Living
Conference
Lincoln, NE
2006 - Presenter

RYAN SALLANS

Professional Affiliations

- * Board Member – Ally Mentoring
- * Iowa Pride Network Coalition
- * Professional Transgender Resource Network Coalition
- * OUTSpeaking LGBTQA Speakers Bureau
- * Writer for Planned Parenthood Online: Gender & Identity, Intersex, & Transgender
- * Planned Parenthood Federation of America Transgender Care Workgroup

**Speaking Engagements and Media Inquiries,
please contact:**

Rosy Stefanatos
RS Communications
Media/Social Media Strategies
rosystef@aol.com
323-646-5809