



Motivational speaker to Hillcrest youth: ‘What you do is not who you are’

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Motivational speaker [Eldridge J. Broussard](#)’s philosophy in life is summed up in a short phrase written on a wristband he wears wherever he goes: “Own who you are.”

For Broussard, that partly includes his troubled beginnings — witnessing his sister being beat to death by members of a cult led by his father, bouncing around the Oregon foster care system, getting mixed up with gangs, and eventually serving several years at the Oregon State Penitentiary after he shot and wounded three men. But it also includes the way he used those experiences to change his own life and the lives of others — by turning away from crime, focusing on positive relationships in his life, challenging the way he felt about himself, and using his own transformation to inspire others to do the same.

Broussard recently shared his story and his insights on leadership and change with youth at Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility. His visit was part of an external program called “[Other Side of Basketball](#),” held at Hillcrest for the past several months.

The program not only taught youth participants basketball skills, but also motivational strategies and tools to use in life outside of the sports realm. Hillcrest opened up Broussard’s speech to all youth at the facility, even if they hadn’t participated in the program.

These are just a few of the words of wisdom Broussard shared with the youth:

- “All leadership is influence. What you do with that influence is up to you.”
- “We have no option of whether we are leaders. The only option we have is how we lead.”



Eldridge J. Broussard recently shared his transformation story with youth at Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility.

- “What you do is not who you are. But what you do gives us an impression and influences us to think of you in a certain way.”
- “Whether you like or respect your parents or not, you’re in their shadow, because of the influence, the leadership they’ve had over you. ... What you were born into doesn’t have to determine what you become.”
- “How you choose to live your life affects other people, whether you want it to or not.”
- “You have got to get relationships in your life that become more influential than your old ones.”
- “No matter who you are, no matter what you’ve done, there’s something you’re supposed to bring to this Earth that no one else can.”
- “When people bring opportunities to you, are they in line with what you want to do in your life? How are you going to decide how to lead yourself?”
- “The relationship you have with yourself is going to set the tone for every other relationship you have in your life.”