



For the Love of the Game

Katyite and KHOU sports reporter

Daniel Gotera shares his passion, hopes, and dreams

Written by Shetye Cypher

Photography by Jason Lehecka

Daniel Gotera has always been a sports fanatic, but it wasn't until he saw the 1993 NBA finals with the Chicago Bulls that he truly found his calling. After that game he decided he wanted to be a play-by-play sports announcer. Since then, Gotera has found a job he loves, and, while he may not be an announcer yet, he does enjoy reporting on all things sports for Channel 11 KHOU.

Getting Started

Born in Chicago, Gotera has always been a diehard White Sox and Bulls fan, but his father's job brought them to Katy when he was 8. He graduated from Cinco Ranch High

School in 2002 and went on to attend his father's alma mater, Northwestern University, where he was the sports director of the student radio station.

After graduating and working as a reporter at a station in Sherman, TX for a few years, he was able to secure a job at KHOU. He immediately felt the pressure and knew he had something to prove, not only to the station, but to himself as well. "The first day at KHOU was very nerve-racking," Gotera recalls. "I was a 25-year-old kid walking into a top 10 market. I felt like I had a thousand set of eyes on me all the time."

Gotera started as the main contact for KHOU.com, but eventually started getting more and more on-air opportunities. His enthusiasm for writing, shooting, and producing almost all of his own stories eventually got the attention of one of the station's news directors. "The news director gave me a lot more air time," he says. "I think I was the first one man band in Houston, sports wise."

A Not So Typical Day

Since then, a typical day can range from attending a high school baseball game to reporting on a Houston Texans' game. Gotera enjoys the rush of not knowing what each day will bring. His favorite stories to cover are those of people who have dealt with or overcome a personal tragedy. "In Sherman, I did a story called 'Buddy Baseball.' It was nominated for an Emmy and was about a little league that was solely developed for kids with disabilities," shares Gotera. "Because of my story, other leagues were formed in other cities."

In 2012, Gotera reported on a 6-year-old boy named Riley whose arm was amputated when he was only 2 due to a rare form of skin cancer. Riley's story is special because he has learned to play little league with only one arm. "He throws, he bats, he gets the ball, and he is a walking miracle," Gotera says. "Those are powerful moments for me."

Living the Dream

Gotera may be doing what he loves, but his dream job is to one day be a play-by-play announcer for the Chicago White Sox. "My whole family is from Cuba and my grandfather and father played baseball," says Gotera. "I wasn't as interested in it when I was little, but over the years I've developed a big liking for baseball."

He knows that none of his dreams would be possible without the hard work his family has had to endure. In 1959 they were forced to leave Cuba after Fidel Castro took over. "My parents went through a lot of hardships to give me the life I have now," shares Gotera. "I am an only child, so I try to make them as proud as possible."

Moving Forward

Gotera and his fiancé Rashi, who is a reporter in College Station, plan on getting married this October. The two have been in a long-distance relationship for the past three-and-a-half years. Gotera currently lives in Katy and greatly enjoys covering the teams he grew up with and their school pride. "I remember the first time I went to a Cinco game and filmed the game on the sidelines," he shares. "There is more passion around Cinco, which is great. I take pride that I live in Katy."

For the future, Gotera hopes to work for the Big Ten Network. His advice for aspiring sports reporters is to make sure you know how to do everything when covering a story. Knowing how to shoot, edit, write, produce, and manage social media sites can really help make you stand out. Gotera has a strong passion for what he does, but makes sure he keeps all things in perspective when reporting. "Have an appreciation for what players go through and their background stories," says Gotera. "You'll gain a new

understanding that way. They are just people too." Gotera knows how lucky he is to be able to do something he loves and hopes others can fulfill their dreams as well. "I love what I do," says Gotera. "I get paid to talk about sports, and that's pretty cool at the end of the day." **KM**



SHETYE CYPHER is a freelance writer who enjoys living in Katy with her family, and is the journalism teacher and publications advisor at Mayde Creek High School.

Q&A

What is your favorite place to eat in Katy?

Marini's Empanada House, Chili's, Chuy's, and Victor's Casa Mexican as a child.

What are your favorite sports teams?

White Sox, Bulls, and Northwestern Wildcats.

If you could interview anyone, who would it be?

Michael Jordan.

What's something viewers may not know about you?

I love Northwestern. I always try to wear something purple on air.

What are your favorite TV shows?

Family Guy, Revenge, and Scandal.

If you weren't a sports reporter, what would you be?

I would probably be working for a college or pro team in media relations.



Gotera has enjoyed being a part of the Katy community for most of his life