



Helping children rise above poverty through education.

Fact Sheet: The Toronto Songwriters' Festival

What?

The Toronto Songwriters' Festival is a new annual festival of original music. There will also be a silent auction, finger foods, desserts and door prizes. This year all proceeds will go toward helping improve learning conditions at Anuban kindergarten school in Southern Laos. To create the festival, JDCF partnered with Songwriter's Unite!--a collective of 400 songwriters run by Russell Leon.

Why?

To help children rise above poverty through education and help support Toronto's homegrown music talent.

Who?

8 talented songwriters: Blue Venus (Andrea de Boer and Devrim Eldelekli), Kat Goldman, Layah Jane, Noah Zacharin, Peter J. Slack, Royal Wood, Suzie Vinnick, The Undesirables (Sean Cotton and Corin Raymond); 1 award-winning comedian: Alex Nussbaum; and, 1 lively band (headed by a Toronto songwriter): The Russell Leon Band

-For artist bios and music samples, drop by:

<http://www.jaideechildrensfund.org/featureActs2006-09-24.html>

When?

Sunday September 24, 2006 at 6:30 pm

Where?

Hugh's Room, a famous music venue at Bloor and Dundas West in Toronto (a five minute walk from the Dundas West subway station)

How Much?

Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased from the charity's website at www.jaideechildrensfund.org. There will be a designated singles table for anyone wishing to come alone. For those just looking for a nightcap, come after 10 pm and pay \$10 at the door to catch The Russell Leon Band.

**Please note that seating is limited--Hugh's Room only holds 200 people.

What next?

-In December, the directors of Jai Dee (Good Heart) Children's Fund will go to Laos to oversee the work on the school and pay for the projects in person. All airfare and expenses will be paid by the directors, out of pocket. Pictures of the school's progress will be posted on JDCF's website, so donors can follow along and see the results of their generosity.

What's special about Jai Dee (Good Heart) Children's Fund?

1. Often when you give money to a charity, you don't get to see the final result of how your money is helping those who need it. We will post photos of all of our projects on our website for donors to see.

2. Often when you give money to a charity, some of that money is going toward paying salaries and administrative costs. Because JDCF is a micro-charity that operates on a grassroots basis, it has very little overhead costs. It is run entirely by volunteers who want to help children rise above poverty through education. All money donated to JDCF goes directly to our projects, unless the donor specifically designates it to cover operating costs.
3. We believe in being accountable for all the money that donors give to us, and making sure it goes directly to pay for projects. For this reason, we don't just hand over money to the school. Instead, we pay for projects based on the invoices we receive for individual projects. We also check to make sure these amounts are in keeping with the actual costs of materials and labour in that country.
4. To support the communities where we work, we hire local people to complete all projects when possible and we also buy supplies locally, rather than shipping them in.
5. To make sure our projects are sustainable and have long-term benefits, we work only with schools that already have strong leadership in place, and just need resources and/or training.

What does "Jai Dee" mean?

In Laos and Thailand, if someone tells you that you have "jai dee," it means you have a "good heart." This is considered of great importance. We felt our charity should encapsulate this quality and share it with children everywhere. We created Jai Dee (Good Heart) Children's Fund with the belief that it takes very little to make a big difference as long as you go forward with "jai dee."

About Jai Dee (Good Heart) Children's Fund:

Jai Dee (Good Heart) Children's Fund is a Toronto-based charity that helps children rise above poverty through education in developing countries at the grassroots level. It is run by a Toronto couple who decided to start it after visiting a kindergarten school in Laos and realizing how little it would take to make a difference. In Thailand and Laos, to have "jai dee" means to have a good heart. For more information please visit www.jaideechildrensfund.org.

Is JDCF a Registered Charity?

We have applied for and been approved by the government as a charity in Ontario, however we are still going through the lengthy process of becoming a registered charity with Revenue Canada. This means we are currently unable to issue official charity receipts for donations.

About Songwriters Unite!:

Songwriters Unite! is a collective of 400 songwriters run by Russell Leon. Leon is a musician who heads up an eponymous band, and a music teacher who recently volunteered to teach children with diabetes to play coffee-container drums at The Hospital for Sick Children.

Russell Leon has been a performer since age 8. After graduating with a music degree from York, he starting teaching in 1994, and now teaches music to grades 1 to 6. He also leads two children's choirs and teaches music part-time at the Institute of Child Studies at OISE. For more information please visit www.songwritersunite.com.