

... accident ended his career as a
... er, Eddie Tuduri found a way to help
... musicians who needed a break.

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I HONESTLY don't know what happened," says Eddie Tuduri, reflecting on the September afternoon in 1997 when he decided to body-surf one last wave near his home in Carpinteria, Calif. "The wave didn't turn.

Top: Eddie Tuduri (seated, r) leads a drum session with (l-r) Trieana Moon, Nicky Romero, Brian Vinson, Mike Lazaro and Ben Watts. Above: Ryan Lauter and Lauren Brenner of No Boundaries record in the studio.

It just went bam!" he recalls, slapping his hands together. "My neck snapped. Suddenly, I was three feet underwater.

"But somehow," he adds, "I knew I was going to be OK."

A weeklong stay in intensive care passed by in a blur, and Tuduri was moved to the Rehabilitation Institute at Santa Barbara. "When I realized the severity of my injury, all I could think was, 'I may never play again,'" says Tuduri, 57, a drummer who toured with the likes of The Beach Boys and Rick Nelson. "I couldn't imagine a life without rhythm."

Tuduri underwent surgery, and—though the paralysis remained—sensation slowly returned to his right hand. Eager to stay connected to music, he asked friends to bring him simple percussion instruments. One day, he absentmindedly began tapping a drumstick on the side of his bed. Before long, a fellow patient joined in, clapping in time. Another rapped a stick on a cowbell with the help of a friendly aide. The litany of sounds drew a roomful of curious doctors, nurses and therapists who urged the group to keep playing.

"It was the beginning of a new life for me," says Tuduri. "The patients in my ward encouraged me to create what has become my life's work."



tighter clumping makes it easier

From his wheelchair, he started conducting drum sessions at his occupational therapy group. Music manufacturers who'd heard of his accident and the hospital "band" began sending him congas, bongos and shakers. The doctors soon noticed that the activity wasn't just fun—it was helping patients regain their focus, balance and motor skills. The turning point came when one 8-year-old boy, who had suffered an aneurysm that left him paralyzed on one side and unable to stand, actually rose from his seat and began rattling a shaker.



"I couldn't imagine a life without rhythm."

—Eddie Tuduri

By the time he left rehab in late 1997, Tuduri had established The Rhythmic Arts Project (TRAP), a nonprofit rehabilitative program for kids and adults with developmental disabilities. TRAP has since spread to 35 cities in California, Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York.

Though he still walks with a cane and regained only half the strength in his left hand, Tuduri is convinced that the accident was meant to be. "I actually thank God for my broken neck every day," he says, "because it's really put me in a much better place."

Three years ago, during a TRAP session at the Ojai Enrichment Center in Ojai, Calif., a young woman with flaming red hair asked, "Eddie, can I play a song for you?" Triana Moon sat down in front of a beat-up piano and began a rousing performance.

"She's not a virtuoso," Tuduri remembers thinking, "but she has more style and energy than anyone I've ever seen." The wheels started turning, and he said, "Wait a minute. I see a record."

With the help of a few fellow musicians, Tuduri created Gifted Artists Records (GAR), a nonprofit label for musicians with disabilities. He produced two solo CDs last year and is at work on a compilation titled *Included*, which he'll release in the fall.

Two of the tracks on the new CD

were contributed by a band called No Boundaries. During a recent rehearsal at The Lakewood Hop in Lakewood, Calif., Lauren Brenner, 23, belted out soulful ballads and pop tunes in a sultry voice. Brenner, the band's petite, auburn-haired singer, has a severe case of attention deficit disorder. Her husky male sidekick, Ryan Lauter, soon stole the show with a wiggling-pelvis rendition of "All Shook Up." Early patrons at the club stopped to cheer.

"It's my all-time dream to be doing this," says Lauter, who is 24 and lives with disabilities that resulted from complications at birth. "It makes me happy."

Without Tuduri, the GAR artists realize, their "big break" might never have happened. "I thank Eddie for that," says Triana Moon, 30, who has Williams syndrome, a genetic condition marked by developmental delays. Brian Vinson, 33, a shy singer-songwriter with schizophrenia, claims a newfound sense of confidence. "It's given me a life," says the handsome musician, whose vocal style is reminiscent of James Taylor's. "It's been a blessing."

Tuduri is now busy trying to expand the roster of talent at his fledgling record label. His ultimate goal? "To set up an industry where people with disabilities can market, package and ship GAR records," says the drummer turned record producer.

In the meantime, No Boundaries and an 8-year-old singer named Kodi Lee, who is blind and autistic, may end up showcasing their abilities abroad. They have been invited to China for a 10-day concert tour in September.

"I'm doing this for the joy that it brings to them and to me," says Tuduri. "These musicians teach me more about life, compassion and unconditional love than anyone ever has." ■



For more on Gifted Artists Records, visit www.parade.com and click on "WebLinks."

Diabetes Healing So

Here's important news for anyone with diabetes. A remarkable book is now available that reveals medically tested principles that can help normalize blood sugar naturally...and greatly improve the complications associated with diabetes. People report **better vision, more energy, faster healing, regained feeling in their feet**, as well as a reduction of various risk factors associated with other diseases.

It's called "*How to Reverse Diabetes*" and it was researched, developed and written by a leading nutrition specialist. It shows you exactly how nature can activate your body's built-in healers once you start eating the right combination of foods. It can work for both Type I and Type II diabetes and people report it has helped reduce their insulin resistance. It can give diabetics control of their lives and a feeling of satisfaction that comes from having normal blood sugar profiles.

The results speak for themselves. "*How to Reverse Diabetes*" is based on research that many doctors may not be aware of yet. It tells you which delicious foods to eat and which to avoid. It also warns you of the potential danger of certain so-called "diabetes" diets. Diabetics are calling this program "very outstanding"... "a tremendous help"... and saying it made "a difference in my life." "*How to Reverse Diabetes*" is based on documented scientific principles that can help:

- Eliminate ketones and give you more abundant energy
- Make blood sugar levels go from High Risk to Normal
- Stimulate scratches and scrapes to heal faster

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