



Healing Musicians in Need



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OUR MISSION

Sweet Relief Musicians Fund provides financial assistance to all types of career musicians who are struggling to make ends meet while facing illness, disability, or age-related problems.

WHO WE ARE

In 1994 Sweet Relief was incorporated as a 501C3 nonprofit charity and for the past 18 years has been offering vital assistance to professional musical artists in need. Many prominent musicians, professionals and music fans have contributed enthusiastically to Sweet Relief Musicians Fund. Benefits have been performed in venues from Miami to Seattle, with performances donated by many established and emerging artists. Nightclubs, concert halls, radio stations, internet sites, restaurants, clothing and shoe companies, music retailers, athletes, actors, corporations, foundations and music fans have all participated with Sweet Relief to assist struggling musicians.

Music has made all of our lives, and the events in our lives special and memorable. While few find fame and fortune, most musicians remain in the field for their love and passion of music. The choice an individual makes to be a professional musician is one of sacrifice. The average

the part time nature of most opportunities is less than \$25,000 annually. Over 65% of professional musicians do not have health insurance.

Since the mid 1960's (Post Beatles) the number of individuals choosing music as a career grew exponentially. Previous to this time most professionals were either orchestra and classical players or jazz and blues artists. The explosion of pop, rock and country career musicians over a 20-year period in the U.S. represented an artistic and cultural revolution.

While the financial hardship a musician faces when dealing with illness or disability may be a constant, we now face a burgeoning elder population of artists with little or no resources available for such emergency situations.

OUR FOUNDER

Sweet Relief was founded by singer-songwriter Victoria Williams in 1993. Victoria, while on a career-making tour with Neil Young was forced to drop off mid-schedule after experiencing unexplained debilitating symptoms. A long and painful diagnostic process revealed she had multiple sclerosis.

After her diagnosis, a group of friends assembled an all-star album of Victoria's songs, Sweet Relief, which alleviated much of her medical debt. Vic, knowing that there are many musicians like her - unable to afford medical expenses and compromised in their ability to work - donated some of her proceeds from the album to found Sweet Relief Musicians Fund.

The name of the fund derives from a song of Victoria's, Opelousas (Sweet Relief) and the fact that we do provide sweet relief in the form of financial assistance to many musicians who would otherwise be in untenable predicaments.

TESTIMONIALS

"Sweet Relief Musicians Fund is a great organization I am proud to be associated with. They've helped so many career musicians faced with serious medical problems, (which of course, will usually lead to astronomical bills that most artists, often lacking insurance, are not equipped to deal with), and at times when every one else has turned their backs. I know first hand, as they've helped me, as well as a number of my friends and cohorts, including its founder, Victoria Williams. Please, Support The Arts. Support Sweet Relief. No Donation Is Too Small!"

“I have seen the caring and dedication of Sweet Relief in action. They don't just provide hope to the musicians in need, they facilitate action! I believe it is the duty of every one of us to participate and provide in any way we can to support their noble mission. Give, and give generously.”

*Al Cafaro – Metropolitan Talent,
Past Chairman/CEO A&M Records*

“Every day, music heals the human spirit. And every day, Sweet Relief ensures that musicians get to heal – so that we don't lose the soundtrack to our lives. Sweet Relief is the conduit between rock and roll and doctors. This is important stuff.”

Jeff Castelaz – CEO Dangerbird

“Profound thanks from the bottom of my heart for being there to help when I needed it most. It is very inspiring to see that there is this loving side of humanity, alive and well, in a world so fraught with horrible news. I believe that the kind of caring you give is ultimately what holds us all together. Special thanks for the excellent handling of my issues and for your kind and helpful communication.” *(Grant recipient; 62 year-old film and concert composer dealing with cancer. Sweet Relief paid for preventative treatment and partial living expenses.)*

Sweet Relief Grant Recipient

“Musicians are always among the first to give their energy and talent to help other people in times of emergency, though they are very often without health insurance themselves, and need our support when they fall prey to illness and hardship. Sweet Relief has been helping musicians for years, and has helped some whom I am very much indebted to for enriching my life.”

Jackson Browne - Musician

HOW TO HELP

There are many ways you can help a musician in need by donating to Sweet Relief. We have a [General Fund](#), as well as a list of more specific funds, allowing you to direct your donation to the region, artist, or genre of your choice. There is also the opportunity to bid on any one of our amazing auction items featured on [Charitybuzz](#), including Autographed Instruments, VIP Concert Tickets, Artist Meet & Greets, and more! We are proud to partner with [The Best Fest](#), the producers of Dylan Fest, Petty Fest, and Stones Fest, which are one-of-a-kind concert events, taking place across the country, with 100% of ticket proceeds going directly to Sweet Relief. And this past fall the charity released our third compilation album, *Sweet Relief III: Pennies From Heaven*, which can be purchased on [iTunes](#) and [Amazon](#).

STAFF

Bill Bennett *President*



Bill brings a wealth of music industry experience along with a broad business background to his role as President at Sweet Relief. Over the past 20 years Bill has taken on leadership positions as a manager, executive and entrepreneur in Entertainment Retail, Venue Operations (Fox Theatre – Boulder, CO.), Artist's Management (Solis Liberi & Secret Chief Management) and Event Promotion. These past endeavors have allowed Bill to work effectively with various entertainment industry partners Sweet Relief has recently developed.

Bill's many close relationships with musicians affords him great understanding and compassion with those reaching out for assistance. As Sweet Relief's financial steward, Bill is able to reach into his many years of experience as an Executive with SRG, a large national hospitality corporation. Specializing in Franchise Development and Regional Management, Bill obtained broad skills in finance, accounting, human resources, marketing and bottom line results.

A lifelong participation in charity and goodwill endeavors may be Bill's most important aspect as a leader at Sweet Relief. Bill has taken on commitments as a youth mentor, participated on numerous hospital panels and volunteered for national charities. Bill also acts as an advisor and advocate for many other entertainment based charities and charities at large.

Rob Max *Executive Director*



Rob has been a creative and energetic force in both the music and financial world for over 25 years. Rob's business career began working in commercial real estate, focusing on environmentally sensitive property. His company, ASC was a leader in fulfilling ECRA (Environmental Clean-Up Responsibility Act) mandates in sale and lease transactions. These stringent guidelines that began in New Jersey in the mid 80's would set the precedent for environmental oversight on a national level. Rob's business career also included a decade in Risk Management in both New York and California. Rob's performed key roles as a Vice President and Director at national corporate entities InsureCast, Berthelon Rowland Corp. and

start-up Internet financial division on Wall Street, NYC, resulted in revenue growth of 50 million dollars annually. This career experience brought him great knowledge in the fields of health, medical, property and liability insurance. This knowledge has proven to be a tremendous asset for Sweet Relief's Constituency in matters of medical treatment and insurance costs.

Rob took a hiatus for several years from his business career in the late 1980's to pursue his passion for music. Rob was a member of two regionally successful bands in NYC, most notably with Crazy Fingers- a house band at the groundbreaking jam band club- The Wetlands Preserve. Rob went on to work in the record and entertainment industries including roles in management, promoting, booking and sound engineer.

A long history of Charity participation began for Rob as President of Alpha Phi Omega, a national service fraternity, and volunteering with The Big Brother Program. Rob has continued work with several hospital panels and volunteer roles at Summit Hospital & St Barnabas Hospital in NJ and South Coast Medical Center & Hoag Hospital in Southern California.

Rob's two young sons, Tyler & Billy are music fanatics and that makes their dad extremely happy. Rob roots passionately for the Terrapins of his beloved Alma Mater, The University of Maryland.

Aric Steinberg *Director of Development*



Aric Steinberg brings more than two decades of operational and management experience to his role as Development Director at Sweet Relief. Aric's past experience in the music industry included working with entertainment and venue acquisition in the Los Angeles and Orange County areas.

As an Operating Partner with Brick Oven Restaurants, Aric opened and operated four locations in Southern California. At each location he was able to reach out to the local communities and create partnerships and sponsorships with the populace. Numerous GM positions at top restaurants and music venues allowed Aric to create special events, local benefits for charities, and several charitable sponsorships.

Aric's experience with major hospitality corporations included spearheading new venue openings in Los Angeles, Orange County, Las Vegas and Arizona. Within his professional and personal life, Aric has been able to create strong ties with the communities and

Aric studied Creative Writing while attending Antioch University, has worked closely with one of the top fundraising consultants in the nation, and has completed the rigorous grant-writing program at the prestigious Grantsmanship Center in Los Angeles. His passion for music, his dedication to helping people and his history of leadership and charitable contributions make him a perfect fit to lead the Sweet Relief development team.

LINKS

- [Sweet Relief Website](#)
- [Press Releases](#)
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- [Get Help](#)

CONTACT

If you have a question, comment or request please feel free to contact us through email, the form below, fax or a good old-fashioned phone call. We look forward to speaking with you.

Sweet Relief Musicians Fund

Corporate Office

Donations & Application Processing Center
2601 E. Chapman Ave. Suite 204
Fullerton, CA, 92831

Tel. 714-626-0447

Fax 714-626-0473

Toll Free Assistance line 888-955-7880

Development Office

615 Thalia Street
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
Tel. 949-715-4606

Email: info@sweetrelief.org

