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L - R: Joe Hardy, David Segal, Andrew Hewitt, Dom Famularo, Mike Mignogna.

THE BEGINNING OF A CHALLENGE BY DAVID SEGAL

On March 15th, 2013, Andrew Hewitt, who hails from Australia, arrived in New York from California to have a lesson with Dom Famularo. Andrew was in Santa Barbara, CA to attend a three-day seminar for Eddie Tuduri's TRAP program [The Rhythmic Arts Project], a workshop-based program to teach people with disabilities how to read, spell, count and use life skills via drums and percussion.

Andrew was born with cerebral palsy. In spite of this, over the past 20 years, he has worked successfully as a performing artist, drum teacher, drum-set clinician, motivational speaker, workshop facilitator and disability advocate. Mike Mignogna, also a drummer, was in town from Tennessee. Mike also has cerebral palsy and has studied and known Dom for over 20 years. Mike published a book entitled *Look Ma No Feet*, a practical approach to the drum set for someone with limited, or no use of their legs. In 2009, the three of them played together in the Ultimate Drummers Weekend in Melbourne, Australia's Darebin Arts Centre.

I had known Dom Famularo since I started going to the KoSA Drum Camp in 2002. Born and raised in New York City and now in residing Connecticut, I formally began studying with Dom in 2004. I was born with arthrogryposis, which affects the development of the bones, muscles and nerves in the hands and feet, and had to have 12 corrective surgeries throughout my youth. In spite of that, the fire to play drums was burning inside me and studying with Dom and other master drummers/percussionists each summer at KoSA inspired me even more. I decided to go back to school and get a B.A. in Music and a Masters in Music Education and was excited to realize a dream and play Carnegie Hall in 2014.

Back to March 2013; we were all in town. Dom suggested meeting at his drum studio to have a summit of sorts, discuss drums and issues we had been dealing with as "challenged" musicians. There was something there previously, but it wouldn't be crystallized until we all were together that day. What if we all came together and formed an organization that could empower all "challenged" musicians—be it physical, mental or intellectual—from across the world.

That day we came up with CandoMusos, got the domain, and CandoMusos.com was born. We chose Can-Do because having that type of attitude is the first step towards success, and Muso is a term used to describe a musician that is passionate about their instrument. We combined the terms to form a unique name that described our vision and mission.

In 2014 we added an associate board member to our main team, Californian drummer Joe Hardy, who was born with no legs and plays with the heavy-metal band Unit 287. For over 30 years he has played drums, has a unique, electronic drumset built into his wheelchair and has developed a special device that allows him to play a bass drum, despite having no legs. Two years removed from that meeting we already have over 150 members from 19 countries.

In January 2015, we spoke at NAMM in the H.O.T. Zone, and included on our panel was drummer Dean Zimmer, who also has arthrogryposis, and guitarist Mark Goffeney, who was born with no arms and plays with his feet. Recently we launched CandoRadio which features music from disabled artists all over the world. If there are any artists with any physical, mental, intellectual challenges and would like to join us please send an email to info@candomusos.com or visit us at candomusos.com. ✨