

An inspiring tale

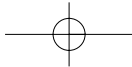
Making the impossible *possible*

This is the story of 26-year old Sujeet Desai, born with Down syndrome, who was in Dubai recently to present a concert unprecedented by any standards,

in an effort to motivate special needs children and to emphasize the pressing need to include young special needs adults in mainstream activities. The concert was organized and presented by SNF (Special Needs Families) Children Development Centre, to generate awareness and above all, as a brilliant inspiration to one and all.



Overcoming limitations posed by his disability, Sujeet who lives in USA has worked very hard the past 10 years, with music that he passionately loves and today is able to play six instruments – Bb and Bass clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Violin, Piano and Drums. In 2003 he passed out from the Berkshire Hills Music Academy after a 2-year residential post-secondary study in Music and Human Sciences. After graduation, he worked as a teacher's aid in the music department of an elementary school. He also plays music in churches, nursing homes,



centres for senior citizens, hospitals and at other local community events, besides working in a library. In addition, Sujeet travels around the world to give his inspirational solo performances and self-advocacy workshops.

In sports, Sujeet has a 2nd degree Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do. He has won gold and silver medals in the World Games 1999 and Special Olympics in Swimming. His other medals and accolades include those won in Special



Olympics in Alpine Skiing, Cross Country Running and Bowling events.

In 1998, when Sujeet started to volunteer to provide entertainment, the overwhelming response received from his audience led to his decision to make music a vital part of his life. Since March 2000 he has performed in several state, national and international conferences and is booked in advance till 2008.

In 2006, Sujeet married Carrie Bergeron, also a self-advocate. The couple enjoys independent living in Rome, New York. Carrie comes from a musical family herself and sings, besides playing the piano and drums.

She is also an excellent speaker who gives workshops, speaking about her life as a young adult with Down syndrome. Her dream is to advocate for those born with this as well as other special needs. She often incorporates sign language in her speeches and is very well received.

Sujeet's life and the strong message that it sends out is an inspiration to each one of us. For it tells the world with head held high that life is all about challenges. While it is the easy way out to give up without a fight and crumble, it is a hero who marches along, taking in his stride the bumpy ride and the surprises just round the corner!

Bravo Sujeet!

