



# Nikki SIXX & Covenant House

**Crüe-man Puts the Music Into Rehab**

By Albert Vega

Covenant House, a privately funded agency providing shelter and service for homeless and runaway youth since its incorporation in 1972, has a long history of providing educational programs to its clients. Up until recently, however, the Los Angeles facility lacked any formal tutelage focusing on music. Now, with the help of Mötley Crüe founder and bassist, Nikki Sixx, that has all changed.

With a donation of \$35,000 to Covenant House California (CHC) in 2006, Sixx kicked off a fundraising initiative for a creative arts program with an emphasis on music. Calling it "Running Wild In The Night," Sixx established the model based on his own experience as a runaway who feels music saved his life.

"I created the music program to engage [clients'] creativity and encourage them to stick around a while to get on a better path for good," said Sixx at an awards gala for CHC this past May.

Sixx also presented a check for \$250,360 to CHC at said gala, from monies raised from royalties of his book, *The Heroine Diaries* and his fan website. He added, "To make the program successful, I've committed both time and money to it over the last year."

As the person hired to oversee the program, Music Coordinator Cole Strom wants to make sure everything is proceeding as Sixx envisioned. "[Sixx] is a fantastic guy who's very driven and passionate. We want things to go according to his plan. We want to maintain a productive learning

environment with positive, therapeutic and tangible results that can change the lives of our clients through the power of music."

With an eight-week cycle for classes, CHC implemented instruction on guitar and the recording process in June, with bass, drum, piano and vocal classes scheduled in the future.

According to Activities Coordinator, Rafael Robledo, guest speakers will be brought in, as well as name talent, to teach master workshops. Structured times will be available in the music studio for clients to practice outside of class and record their own projects.

"Like anything we do at CHC," says Robledo, "we first provide recreational and creative arts therapy; therefore all of our workshops are open to all clients."


And for clients who excel and want to continue pursuing a musical interest, CHC will be providing scholarships to music schools.

"The goals of the program are to focus on teaching our clients another form of therapy and self-expression," says Robledo. "If we can teach one client how to play guitar and that gets him through the day, the week or the year, then the goal of the program was met."

Alongside Sixx's financial contributions, a list of companies provided their own donations to ensure a solid beginning to CHC's music program. Benefactors such as the Gibson Foundation, VocalBooth.com, Gauge Precision, Inc., Stage Ninja, Kaman Music, Dixon and Onani Guitar Straps all supplied support.

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"So many people have helped out," says Strom. "I think they realize we're really going to be changing people's lives and making an impact, which is a very powerful thing." 

Anybody wishing to help the "Running Wild In The Night" music program or Covenant House California can do so by logging on to [www.covedove.org/nikkisixx.htm](http://www.covedove.org/nikkisixx.htm) and clicking the link at the bottom of the page or by calling 323-461-3131.

