

New Music Video Becomes Anthem For National Opioid Crisis Awareness Campaign

Opioid awareness rallies across the country will play 'Dedicated to Life' on May 6.



Norwalk, Connecticut Apr 25, 2023 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - When Bruce James' longtime friend Robin Golden Trotter lost her daughter to fentanyl poisoning in 2019, the Hilton Head, SC, musician knew he had to do something. "My mission became very clear," says James, a singer/songwriter with five decades in the business. Released just this month, are the fruits of his labor, a new music video produced with Factory Underground Studio in Norwalk, CT, called "Dedicated to Life." [AVAILABLE [HERE](#) ON YOUTUBE] The song, written and composed by James in the pop/rock genre, delivers a message to young people to choose life, hope and love. It has been selected by APALD, a national organization dedicated to raising awareness for the opioid crisis facing so many people in the United States today, and will be played during a national rally day on May 6, 2023.

A Lifetime of Music

James was inspired as a child to go into the music industry. "My inspiration into this marvelous world of music came from my mom, Dolores," he says. "At a very early age, she sat me down in front of the Grundig stereo console and played countless songs from many different artists: Glen Campbell, Frank Sinatra, Andy Williams, John Gary. "Then one Sunday evening, at the impressionable age of 11, I saw the Beatles play on the Ed Sullivan Show," says James. "The next day I asked my dad for a guitar and the rest is history."

Songs That Make a Difference

Being a severe stutterer from third grade into his early 20s, disfluency, shyness and fear pulled him closer to music as a way to communicate. He realized the impact music can have on both those who create it and those who hear it. Like his new music video "Dedicated to Life," James frequently writes about timely social issues impacting the world around him. He is a poet at heart, inspired by greats such as James Taylor, John Denver, The Eagles, Jim Croce and Bob Dylan). His soulful lyrics are meant to inspire and uplift. "As musicians and writers, we all grow and change and sometimes we latch on to a cause we feel we need to reflect on," says James. He wrote his first song in 1972, "Lay Down Your Arms," a Vietnam-era song. Over the years, he has produced close to 100 songs, mostly his own compositions. He has worked alongside countless artists, including working as an engineer/producer with José Feliciano.

Grammy-Winning Producer Takes Notice

"I have known Bruce for a long time, and I've always admired his passion for every song he has written," says Jimmy Ienner (Stamford, CT), Grammy- and Oscar-winning American music and film executive known for co-producing the soundtrack to Dirty Dancing among other well-known albums. "I've been lucky enough to have worked with many giants of this world and the consistency I see with Bruce similar to that of other big talents I've worked with is the clarity and subject in every song. Here's to many more."

Talented Partners

For "Dedicated to Life," James performed on acoustic guitar himself. He partnered with singer [Josue Avila](#) (Winter Park, FL), a father of three, and Christian artist and musical director at Calvary Orlando

Church, who sang and performed keyboards and programming for the arrangement. Mark Vollenweider (Trumbull, CT), performed on drums.

This is James' second collaboration with Avila, whom he met while they were neighbors in Norwalk, CT. He helped James finish his Christian pop song, "Jesus Look in My Eyes," when he decided to make the song bilingual. "He has been a friend and co-producer ever since," adds James.

"Nobody else has Bruce James' voice," says Avila, who was drawn to partnering with James because of his talent and his message. "His style is so different from mine, but we were able to bring it together and make a fusion of sound and ideas. We come up with some pretty cool ideas together. It's music that speaks to everyone."

Avila describes his own sound as a little bit pop, gospel and funk. His Christian background influences him as a musician even when he isn't singing about Jesus. He says James' song spoke to him because it's about spreading love and spreading positivity. Even though the song doesn't mention God, his message speaks to Avila on a spiritual level. "That's what Jesus is all about. He's all about love. That's what the world needs: an artist who bring the message of love, hope and happiness."

The message of hope and the cause of raising awareness about the opioid crisis is also what spoke to Ethan Isaac (a Ridgefield, CT), co-owner of [Factory Underground Studio](#), who is producing the music video. "We wanted to see Bruce's vision through," says Isaac. "We believe in his vision and in his message and we want to get behind him as a company to raise awareness."

Putting a Face on a Crisis

Production for "Dedicated to Life" proved challenging yet rewarding. A major feature of the video is a wall of images showing the faces of countless victims of fentanyl poisoning whose loved ones reached out to share their story with James from an organization called the Association of People Against Lethal Drugs (APALD). The nonprofit website [weareapald.org](#), is based in Delphus, a small town outside of Lima, OH, and founded by Diane Urban, who also lost her son to fentanyl in 2019. She reached out to many families in touch with the organization asking them to share their stories. "As the emails poured in, moms, dads, brothers and sisters shared their heartbreaking sad stories with me in written form and sometimes by telephone. Myself having three children, I can't even imagine their grief," says James. "After constructing the video wall and seeing the endless stream of faces that will never smile again, I knew it needed to show more—more of what these souls, mostly children and young adults, will never get to experience. I need whoever watches this video to feel that anger, the senseless loss, the incredible sadness."

As with so many of James' songs, he is hoping this one can make a difference. For James, this song has become more than a melody but rather a first step in addressing a serious crisis. In 2021, the Center for Disease Control National Center for Health Statistics reported 71,238 deaths attributed to synthetic opioids (fentanyl), a 20% increase from the year prior. For so many users, like Urban's own son, it starts out as pain management and quickly becomes an addiction or an overdose. As Urban and her organization travel around the country, the video is going to be used as part of the organization's APALD Third Annual Nationwide Rally on Saturday, May 6, 2023. Last year, 38 cities across America participated in the rally day and Urban expects the number of locations will increase this year. "So many parents want to hold a rally in their city," she says. "Our hope will be that the song and video will not only become an anthem song but also help bring awareness to the No. 1 cause of death in America for young people ages 18 to 45."

So far, for 2023, confirmed rally cities include:

Tucson, AZ

Sacramento, CA

MacClenny, FL

Fort Wayne, IN

Huntington, IN

Indianapolis, IN

Lowell, IN

Taunton, MA

Jefferson City, MO

Henderson, NV

Brevard, NC

Niagara Falls, NY

Cottage Grove, OR

Eugene, OR

Erie, PA

Pittsburgh, PA

Philadelphia, PA

Greenville, SC

TBA, TN

Austin, TX

Fort Worth, TX

Odessa, TX

Hopewell, VA

Salt Lake City, UT

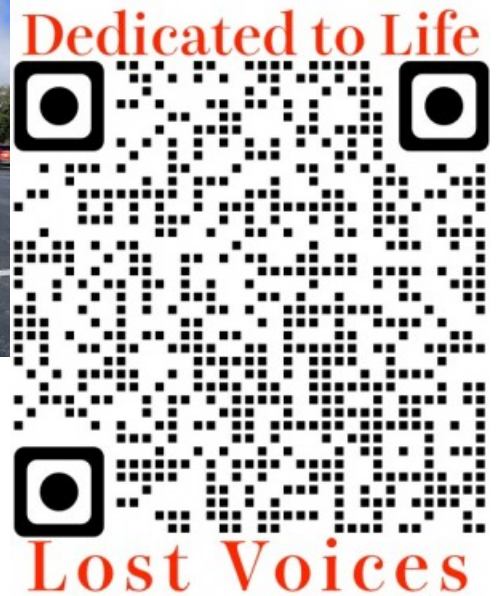
Spokane, WA

For more information about Bruce James, visit his website, brucejamesmusic.com, or find him on Facebook, Bruce James.

For Press Images click here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/4lvv5z0tunj517njscxmz/h?dl=0&rlkey=81foycynxd7vaq0z7cx3e4yho>

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