

Music prevails



Finding harmony within multiple sclerosis

by **Steven Riccio**

The dream of my youth was to explore the realms of music. When I was 13 years old, I picked up my father's dusty, red-and-white Squire Stratocaster guitar and taught myself how to play it. After a couple years developing my musicianship, I began to compose and produce my own music.

When I was 19, I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis after an isolated case of optic neuritis, where parts of my vision became faded and discolored. Experiencing this sensation was surreal and frightening. It could have easily crippled my passion for music, but I decided I would never let it define me.

I merged my devotion for music and my ambition to improve my health by evolving my proficiency in performing on the drums. Enhancing my coordination, strength and endurance helped me to combat the debilitating symptoms of MS while further crafting my musicianship.

I graduated magna cum laude from the University of Bridgeport in 2016. I earned a bachelor's degree in music with a minor in English, while building my music and fashion company, Horriblyright. I composed, performed, produced and engineered our music, while creating our imagery through photography, video and web design. I also developed our live performances, featuring a programmed light show, choreographed to our instruments and sound effects.

My dream became a reality thanks to my proactive mentality. Multiple sclerosis will never

define me.

Steven Riccio lives in Philadelphia.

See more of Steven's music and other works at stevenriccio.com, [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).