

**THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS PRESENT 'I WON'T BACK DOWN' FEATURING  
BLAKE SHELTON, JOE WALSH, TIMOTHY B. SCHMIT & MATT SORUM IN  
SUPPORT OF AFGHAN GIRLS MUSIC GROUP & THEIR QUEST FOR NEW HOME**



[https://youtu.be/US\\_O4xbQTE8](https://youtu.be/US_O4xbQTE8)

**FEBRUARY 28, 2023 (ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN)** – The fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban on August 15, 2021, continues to resonate and claim new victims. At the end of 2022, the group banned women from working in local and foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs). No one can say how much worse the oppression against women and girls in the country will get, but it doesn't look good.

For members of **THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS** — a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that served as Afghanistan's only school of music for war-torn, poverty-stricken girls and young women until August 15, 2021 — the arrival of the Taliban changed everything. The guitar lessons, the recordings, the videos, and the hope for a better life — all gone in a flash. Their instruments destroyed, their dreams shattered, these post-9/11 children had never experienced the harsh rule of the Taliban in their lifetime. It was a disruption like no other.

**LANNY CORDOLA**, the group's American founder and director, managed to catch the last commercial flight out of Kabul not knowing what was in store as he had already booked the fare to Pakistan to renew his visa before the Taliban moved in. He immediately went right to work, relentlessly chasing every possibility he could to get his students and their families out of Afghanistan.

“They're my girls,” he told one reporter. “I've been like a father to them. I don't want to be safe right now. I want to get them out of that place.”

After nine months of dealing with rescue agencies, special operation teams, self-styled mercenaries, layers of bureaucracy and tons of red tape, **CORDOLA** was able to provide safe passage for his girls and their families out of Afghanistan and into Pakistan. It was a perilous journey from Kabul to Islamabad.

Like its neighbor, Pakistan is in the grips of social unrest, political upheaval, and economic instability. There's also widespread discrimination against Afghan refugees, who are routinely harassed and made to feel unwelcome. While they've been able to resume their musical endeavors to a certain extent and avoid the rule of the Taliban, **THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS** are still refugees who need a place to settle down and call home.

In their quest for freedom, prosperity, and happiness, they won't back down. And neither will **CORDOLA** and the group's numerous supporters.



To show their commitment and underscore how far they've come, **THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS** have recorded a version of **TOM PETTY**'s "**I WON'T BACK DOWN.**" Joining the MLKs is country superstar **BLAKE SHELTON**, along with three members of the distinguished **ROCK & ROLL HALL OF FAME**: guitarist **JOE WALSH** and bassist **TIMOTHY B. SCHMIT** of **THE EAGLES**, plus drummer **MATT SORUM** of **GUNS N' ROSES** and **VELVET REVOLVER**.

"When I was working to get the girls out of Afghanistan, '**I WON'T BACK DOWN**' became our anthem to never give up no matter what the circumstances or odds in our pursuit of freedom, justice, equality, and peace," **CORDOLA** recalls. "It's not only for the girls and women of Afghanistan but for all oppressed people of the world. As **TOM PETTY** so powerfully wrote" 'You can stand me up at the gates of hell but I won't back down...'"

**JOE WALSH** shares: "May music always bring you girls the inspiration and connection to a higher power that delivers you strength and joy. I'm grateful to have shared this moment with you all. Peace and love."

"Congrats on the wonderful work you are doing for these girls," **MARJORIE BACH, WALSH's** wife, adds. "Service to others is the key to a blessed life."

**TIMOTHY B. SCHMIT** recognizes the power of music in bringing hope to those in despair. "Lanny is a saint for being a part of these girls' lives by helping them move forward through music. Even after all they've experienced in their young lives, you can see and feel their beautiful life forces shining through."

Echoing the sentiment, **MATT SORUM** sees how the experience of making music is a healing force for the **MLKs**. "I'm so proud of my longtime friend Lanny as he has shared the gift of music with these wonderful young girls that have been through so much," he says. "The joy they feel playing music gives them much needed hope to persevere. They are an inspiration to us all. Please help them with their endeavors to relocate and spread their message of peace and love around the world."

For **LANNY CORDOLA & THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS**, the continued support for their journey to freedom helps in keeping them motivated to move forward.

"The girls and I are honored to have Blake, Joe, Timothy and Matt join us in spreading this message far and wide," **CORDOLA** says. "Hopefully their involvement will bring more awareness about Afghan refugees like the girls and their quest for a better life."



\*\*\*

**“I WON’T BACK DOWN”**

**THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS** - guitars & vocals

**BLAKE SHELTON** - vocals

**JOE WALSH** - guitar solo

**TIMOTHY B. SCHMIT** - bass

**MATT SORUM** - drums

**GARY GRIFFIN** - keyboards

**DAVE PEARLMAN** - pedal steel

**CHAD SHLOSSER** - guitar

Produced by **LANNY CORDOLA** and **SARMAD GHAFOR**

Mixed by **CHAD SHLOSSER**

Video filmed in Kabul, Afghanistan; Islamabad, Pakistan; Los Angeles and Nashville

Video directed by **LANNY CORDOLA**

Edited by **SHAM KAZMI**

Special thanks to **SCOTT HENDRICKS, JOHN GREENBERG, SHAWN PERRY, MARK LEVINE, TOM MORELLO, TODD SHEA, LUDO VAN VOOREN, JEFF PETERS, PAUL GOLDSMITH, NEIL WILLIAMS, DEBBIE AND GLENN BICKERSTAFF, LEE METZGER & TOM RITTENHOUSE**

\*\*\*

**THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS** have captured the world’s attention through their musical collaborations with such luminaries as **BRIAN WILSON, SAMMY HAGAR, TOM MORELLO (RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE, AUDIOSLAVE), RAMI JAFFEE (FOO FIGHTERS), KATHY VALENTINE (THE GO-GO’S), VICKI PETERSON (THE BANGLES), CHERIE CURRIE (THE RUNAWAYS), WAYNE KRAMER (MC5), KRIS MYERS (UMPHREY’S MCGEE), and many others.**

The group has also garnered a respectable amount of press coverage by such high-profile outlets as the **BBC, ROLLING STONE, TMZ, CBS, and SPIN**. ABC’s **‘GOOD MORNING AMERICA 3’** did an in-depth exposé on **THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS**, which featured actor, musician, and supporter **KIEFER SUTHERLAND** praising the group’s efforts. “It’s just amazing to see these young children who have been through poverty and war and families being torn apart — that they can find joy and a desire to learn, and positive aspects of their lives through an incredibly difficult time. It’s moving and it’s inspiring.”

**LANNY CORDOLA** began his journey through Pakistan and Afghanistan in 2010, collaborating with musicians on a peace-through-music project. "After visiting and meeting many kids who were living in poverty-stricken areas and conflict zones, I decided to raise funds on their behalf," the musician recalls.

Since then, he has focused on musical projects aimed at raising awareness, resources and funds for some of the most vulnerable children in Pakistan and Afghanistan. In the wake of his work in these regions, he formed his own non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization called **THE**

**MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS**, based on the premise that “it shouldn’t hurt to be a child” and “that a kid with a melody in their heart has hope, and with hope all things are possible.”

On September 8, 2012, sisters **PARWANA** and **KORSHID** were killed by a suicide bomber in Kabul, Afghanistan. The intended target was U.S. military forces. According to the troops who were there, the sisters sacrificed their own lives to save them.

During a visit to the region in 2014, **LANNY** met with the sisters’ family, including their younger sibling **MURSAL**, who had survived the attack. The family was living in absolute squalor, but when **MURSAL** saw the guitar that constantly accompanies **LANNY**, she brightened up and asked if he would teach her to play so she could honor her sisters and other girls living in similar conditions. And with that, **THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS/GIRL WITH A GUITAR** was born.

In February 2016, **LANNY** moved to Kabul, Afghanistan, where he taught guitar, English, and other life skills to hundreds of mostly girls at **THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS** Studio until August 2021.

To learn more, please go to the following links:

**THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS WEBSITE** > [miraculouslovekids.org/](http://miraculouslovekids.org/)

**THE MIRACULOUS LOVE KIDS FACEBOOK** > [facebook.com/Themiraculouslovekids](https://facebook.com/Themiraculouslovekids)

**LANNY CORDOLA FACEBOOK** > [facebook.com/lanny.cordola](https://facebook.com/lanny.cordola)

**EMAIL ADDRESS** > [lcordola19@gmail.com](mailto:lcordola19@gmail.com)

### **ABOUT LANNY CORDOLA**

Born and reared in Los Angeles, California, **LANNY CORDOLA's** musical journey has led him on many global explorations — from club gigs up and down the Sunset Strip to tours of North America, Mexico, Europe and South Asia. He has shared musical communion on stage and in the studio with members of **THE BEACH BOYS, GUNS N' ROSES, NANCY SINATRA, ETTA JAMES, LITTLE MILTON, VANILLA FUDGE, DONOVAN**, and others.