



MEDIA CONTACT:

Julia Bishop-Cross
Mobile: 314-681-2094
Email: Julia@pr-catalyst.com

It's a SUPREME Variety Week!

DIANA ROSS!

Icon, American Music Award Winner, Grammy Nominee, Tony Award Winner, and Best Actress Oscar Nominee to Headline Variety's Dinner with the Stars

Variety Welcomes Back Joe Buck as the Evening's Emcee

New York's Carmen Marc Valvo's Collection the Highlight of Runway Lights Fashion Show

St. Louis (January 25, 2012) – Variety the Children's Charity of St. Louis will celebrate 80 years of helping St. Louis kids with disabilities this April as Variety Week kicks off with the Runway Lights Fashion Show (April 21), continues with the Fox 2/News 11 Call-A-Thon for Kids, the Imo's for Kids Day, and ends with the two most anticipated social events of the year, the Young Variety Night of the Rising Stars and the Dinner with the Stars black tie gala (April 28). Variety is pleased to announce that for this special anniversary year, music legend Diana Ross will headline at the Dinner with the Stars! For the first time, the dinner and concert will be held at the newly-refurbished Peabody Opera House, inspiring this year's art deco theme, and also for the first time the entire cost will be underwritten by World Wide Technology, Centene Corporation and the David Steward Family, meaning all the money raised will go to the kids. Variety Week is the pillar fundraising and awareness campaign for the charity.

"Oak is the traditional anniversary gift for 80 years – we feel our relationship with the St. Louis community is as strong as oak! It is so appropriate to hold this event at the Peabody – our city began construction on the historic Kiel Opera House in 1932, the same year Variety was started in St. Louis," said Jan Albus, Variety CEO. "We're extremely excited to welcome a superstar like Diana Ross to the Variety family, and what better place to hear her sing than the amazing acoustics of the Peabody."

Billboard magazine calls Diana Ross the “Female Entertainer of the Century.” An American singer, record producer, and actress, Ross started her career as lead singer of the Motown group The Supremes and went on to a successful solo career that included ventures into film and Broadway. Ross received a Best Actress Academy Award nomination and a Golden Globe for her role as Billie Holiday in *Lady Sings the Blues*, several American Music Awards, 12 Grammy Award nominations, and a Tony Award for her one-woman show, *An Evening with Diana Ross*. The Guinness Book of World Records also declares her the most successful female artist in history, as she’s had more hits on the charts than any other female artist and a total of 18 number one records in the U.S. She’s sold more than 100 million records worldwide.

Dinner with the Stars caps off a full week of Variety events:

- Variety Week starts Saturday, April 21, at the Chase Park Plaza with the **Runway Lights Fashion Show**, where for the first time Variety will present a New York style runway fashion show featuring the full collection of New York designer Carmen Marc Valvo. Valvo has been exploring his soul’s desire to bring glamorous dressing to every woman’s life since 1989. Notable women of the world turn to his exquisite taste, from HRH Princess Madeleine of Sweden to Queen Latifah to Beyonce and Katie Couric. The Variety Children’s Chorus will perform, and the Ameren PowerKids will hit the runway in their power wheelchairs. Fox 2’s Mandy Murphey will emcee.
- The Week continues on Tuesday, April 24, with the **Fox 2/News 11 Call-A-Thon**.
- Wednesday, April 25, will be **Imo’s for Kids Day**. Imo’s Pizza will offer at least 10 percent of profits of all sales of the Square Beyond Compare on this day to Variety. This annual event traditionally raises six figures for the children’s charity.
- For the first time, **Young Variety’s Night of the Rising Stars** will take place on Saturday, April 28, in conjunction with the **Dinner with the Stars**, allowing Young Variety members to join Dinner with the Stars participants for the Diana Ross concert at the Peabody. This year marks Marilyn Fox’s 15th year as Dinner with the Stars Chairman. This year Variety will honor Chairman and CEO of Centene Corporation’s Michael Neidorff as Variety’s Man of the Year and Thelma Steward as Variety’s Woman of the Year. Last year’s Dinner with the Stars, featuring singer Patti LaBelle, raised a record-breaking \$1.26 million for Variety.

In 2011, Variety Week raised \$3.35 million for St. Louis children with physical and mental disabilities. Every dollar raised during Variety Week stays in St. Louis to purchase vital medical equipment and fund specialized programs for the more than 14,500 families Variety serves each year.

About Variety the Children’s Charity of St. Louis

For 80 years, **Variety the Children’s Charity of St. Louis** has helped thousands of children with disabilities say “I can” by providing them with vital medical equipment, as well as educational, therapeutic and recreational programs such as the annual Adventure Camp and Variety the Children’s Charity Theatre. An international leader in fundraising, Variety the Children’s Charity also distributes grants to more than 80 qualified agencies throughout the St. Louis area to fund programs and/or services that directly impact the lives of children with physical and mental disabilities. David Steward, chairman and found of World Wide Technology, Inc., is the organization’s president. For more information on Variety, including upcoming events and volunteer opportunities, visit www.varietystl.org.