



Event Details Below
Interviews and Photos Available, Contact:
Julia Bishop-Cross
Mobile: 314-681-2094
Email: Julia@pr-catalyst.com

"For all these years, she sits at the end of the driveway and watches all the other kids ride. This is the best Christmas she could have." – Jennifer, mother of Jessica

"It's given her freedom. A lot of freedom that she didn't have and has lived with since the day she was born." - Steve, father of Jenny

"It means she can keep up with regular kindergarten kids. It means she can get from point A to point B safely and just be a kid and not be a kid with a disability." – Elizabeth, mother of Emily

Just in Time for the Holidays, Variety Gives 30 Custom-Built Therapeutic Bikes and 200 Huffys to St. Louis Kids

ST. LOUIS (December 2, 2011) – For the fifteenth year in a row, Variety the Children's Charity will give hundreds of bikes to St. Louis area kids who never dreamed of taking a spin on their own bike.

This Saturday morning, December 3, nearly 200 Variety volunteers will arrive at the Mark Twain Athletic Facility at the University of Missouri – St. Louis with tools in hand to build and give 200 Huffy bikes to kids from six different agencies that impact the lives of children living with disabilities. In addition, a team from Creative Mobility in Chicago will do final fittings for 30 Variety kids who will drive away with custom-built therapeutic bikes. These specially-made bikes cost anywhere from \$1000 to \$4500, and their families would not have been able to afford them without help from Variety.

"Bikes for Kids is an incredible day supported by my mother since its founding in 1996," said Honorary Chair Lucia Rodriguez, daughter of late St. Louis Rams owner Georgia Frontiere. "My mother remembered the joy of getting her first bike, and she wanted to make sure more St. Louis kids had the chance to feel that same excitement. After 15 years, we've given away more than 2,500 bikes!"

Children will also receive a helmet, a bike lock and safety instruction. Volunteers will build the bikes from 8am until 10:30am, when the Variety kids will arrive for their custom fitting.

"Therapeutic bikes give freedom of mobility to these kids who may not have the use of their legs due to a condition like spina bifida or cerebral palsy," said Hal Honeyman, maker of the bikes and owner of

Creative Mobility. “One child may use their hands to pedal or another child may need all the controls on one side if they are paralyzed on the other. Whatever the child’s condition, we’ll design a bike that he or she can ride.”

The Variety Bikes for Kids event is made possible through sponsorships from the David Lichtenstein Foundation, World Wide Technology, Bunzl, Interco Charitable Foundation and the St. Louis Rams.

Once the Variety kids are fitted for their bikes, volunteers will welcome 200 more children with applause, cheers, bells and whistles as they receive their Huffy bikes. Children from Variety partner agencies Crider Health Center, William Bedell ARC, Hyde Park Outreach, United Services, Northside Community Center, and the Central Institute for the Deaf will take home bikes to ride this holiday season.

WHAT: Nearly 200 Variety volunteers will arrive with tools in hand to build 200 Huffy bikes for St. Louis kids who wouldn’t otherwise have received a bike for their holiday gift this year. Volunteers from six St. Louis agencies that help children with disabilities will cheer and clap and relive the joy of getting their first bike as the kids see their bikes for the first time.

In addition, representatives from Creative Mobility, a maker of therapeutic bikes for children, will show off 30 new bikes made especially for 30 Variety kids who live with a range of physical disabilities. Final fittings will be made and each child will take a bike home and learn to ride. Therapeutic bikes cost anywhere from \$1,000 to \$4,500 per bike.

WHO: **Jan Albus, Variety St. Louis CEO**
Honorary Event Chairman, Lucia Rodriguez
Hal Honeyman, Creative Mobility

Also representatives from Crider Health Center, William Bedell ARC, Hyde Park Outreach, United Services, Northside Community Center, and Central Institute for the Deaf

WHERE: Mark Twain Athletic Facility at the University of Missouri – St. Louis
1 University Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63121

WHEN: Saturday, December 3, 2011
Volunteers arrive to begin building at 8:30am
Variety children fitted for therapeutic bikes 10:30am
Children from each agency introduced with claps, cheers and whistles every ten minutes after the Variety children receive their bikes

PHOTO

OPPS: Volunteers building and “gift-wrapping” bikes, representatives from Creative Mobility fitting Variety kids to their custom-build therapeutic bikes, the joy on children’s faces as they see their bikes for the first time! Interviews available – please contact Julia Bishop-Cross at 314-681-2094 to schedule.

About Variety the Children’s Charity of St. Louis

For nearly 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 Children’s Theatre. An international leader in fundraising, Variety the Children’s Charity and supports select programs of more than 80 qualified partner agencies throughout the St. Louis area to provide services that directly impact the lives of children with physical and mental disabilities. David Steward, chairman and founder 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.