



## **For Immediate Release**

February 12, 2017

### **51<sup>st</sup> Show of Hearts raises over \$5M for kids with special needs**

**(Burnaby, BC)** A surprise \$1 million donation from the Illich Family Foundation, long time Variety supporters, capped off Sunday's Show of Hearts telethon on Global BC, where Variety – the Children's Charity of BC raised an incredible \$5, 087,000 for families who have children with special needs.

The Show of Hearts, which moved to a one-day format this year, featured dozens of inspiring stories, magic moments, and live performances from Dallas Smith, Dan Mangan, and the Washboard Union among others.

Broadcast live from the Molson Canadian Theater at the Hard Rock Vancouver, this year's telethon allowed Global BC's audiences all across the province to see their donor dollars in action, as updates on kids like Johannes, Drake and Oliver – first introduced during last November's Variety Week – provided heartwarming reminders of the real difference Variety makes for families every day.

"It was exciting, it was moving, it was humbling – the whole day was almost overwhelming," says Variety BC CEO, Kristy Gill. "I am completely blown away by the generosity of our donors. The funds we raised today are going to help kids in communities across British Columbia to walk, to speak, to learn ... I'm so proud of our Variety team, all of our partners, and everyone else who contributed to make this day such a success for kids with special needs and their families."

Other highlights of the day included the presentation of two accessible Sunshine Coaches to the Kamloops Child Development Centre, dozens of cheque presentations from community partners, and interviews with Variety kids past and present, conducted by Global News on-air personalities, including Chris Gailus, Sophie Lui, and Kristi Gordan, among others.

Another very special moment was the presentation of a brand-new Sunshine Family Van to 15 year old Destiny and her mom Tanya. The fully converted Dodge Grand Caravan means that Destiny, who lives with Rett syndrome, a rare and severe neurological disorder, will have much more freedom to get out into the community, without it being a daily struggle.

"Congratulations to Variety BC on another successful Show of Hearts Telethon and a big thank you to our viewers for their overwhelming generosity and continued support," says Kenton Boston, VP, News & Information, Global News & Corus Radio, Western Canada. "Thanks to you, Variety BC is able to help more kids and families than ever and we're happy to support it the best way we know how – through the power of television and online."



In addition to the TV broadcast, the Show of Hearts also reached new audiences through livestream at [globalnews.ca](http://globalnews.ca) and extensive social media coverage. Online media expert Rebecca Bollwitt, better known as Miss 604, returned to the telethon for the third straight year with her Social Lounge and team of bloggers keeping fans engaged with behind-the-scenes sneak peeks, updates and real-time social conversations throughout the celebration.

Variety would like to give a special thanks to its Show of Heart partners: Global BC, TELUS, White Spot, The Hard Rock Vancouver, ProShow Audiovisual, Great Canadian Gaming Corporation, Teekay Shipping, Maple Ridge Chrysler, Canadian Western Bank, Chevron, Daily Hive, and Miss 604.

For those who missed the Show of Hearts, it's not too late to help. Donations can be made anytime online at [variety.bc.ca](http://variety.bc.ca), toll-free by phone at 310-KIDS, or by texting "KIDS" to 45678 to make an automatic \$20 contribution.

-30-

### **About Variety - the Children's Charity of BC:**

Variety - the Children's Charity steps in where health care ends, providing direct help to children with special needs in BC and the Yukon. For over 50 years Variety BC has ensured children have the support to reach their potential.

Together, we can be there when a family needs us the most.

Since 2010 Variety BC has distributed more than \$25 million in funding to families and organizations in communities all across the province. With your help, we can raise even more!

For more information on how you can support Variety - the Children's Charity, visit [variety.bc.ca](http://variety.bc.ca) or call 604.320.0505.

### **Media Contact:**

Kim Bowie  
Direct: 604-268-3888  
Cell: 604-790-2301  
Email: [kim.bowie@variety.bc.ca](mailto:kim.bowie@variety.bc.ca)