

## **VARIETY – THE CHILDREN’S CHARITY OF WISCONSIN WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*Board member Lisa Tomachek takes over for longtime ED Gerise LaSpisa*

**August 29, 2017 - ELM GROVE, Wis.** - Variety – the Children’s Charity of Wisconsin has named Lisa Tomachek, a Variety board member and active volunteer, to serve as the charitable organization’s new executive director. Tomachek takes over for Gerise LaSpisa, who has served in the role since January 2008.

Tomachek has served on the Variety board since the start of this year, along with actively volunteering for a number of Variety fundraising events. A Caledonia resident, Tomachek spent 30 years in the private sector before joining Variety, most recently with Diversey, Inc. Tomachek and her husband Jeff have two adult sons.

“Gerise has transformed Variety and developed programs that have brought joy to literally hundreds of kids and their families across Wisconsin,” Tomachek said. “My mission going forward will include redoubling Variety’s commitment to providing children facing physical disabilities with experiences that can transform their lives.”

Tomachek encouraged the public to learn about Variety and get involved by visiting [www.varietywi.org](http://www.varietywi.org) or emailing Variety at [contact@varietywi.org](mailto:contact@varietywi.org). She noted the success Variety has enjoyed with several popular and unique efforts on behalf of children challenged by physical disabilities, including:

- The customized adaptive bike program, which has helped hundreds of kids enjoy the simple childhood pleasure of riding their own bike. This program, which began in 2010, has attracted extensive state and national attention for successfully providing specially modified bikes.
- Chatter Matters! Communication camp, which focuses on children with disabilities who are also nonverbal. Families get to enjoy the pleasures of summer camp, and are united with licensed therapists and graduate students in therapy to help children and families increase the child's communication through the use of electronic devices with speech output.
- Future Program, which provides fun, free opportunities for Variety kids and their families to enjoy typical family experiences. In 2016, Variety hosted more than 70 events for over 3,000 attendees throughout Wisconsin.

LaSpisa, a former prosecutor who resigned as executive director on Friday, August 18, will return to the courtroom as an assistant district attorney in Dane County. She intends to continue serving Variety’s mission as a board member and volunteer.

“I am blessed to have met so many wonderful children, and to have had the chance to lead Variety through a time of great change and growth,” LaSpisa said. “We dramatically increased our fundraising and developed a host of successful programs. Those efforts will continue, and Variety is in very good hands with Lisa in the role.”

**ABOUT VARIETY – THE CHILDREN’S CHARITY OF WISCONSIN**

In 1935, a group of businessmen, most of them with ties to show business, formed a chapter of Variety in Milwaukee. Today it is known as Variety- the Children’s Charity of Wisconsin, whose mission is to provide life-enriching assistance to Wisconsin children challenged by physical disabilities.

**For more information, contact Variety – the Children’s Charity of Wisconsin**

262.777.2090

[contact@varietywi.org](mailto:contact@varietywi.org)