



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COCA Raises \$860,000 at April Fundraiser to Benefit Arts Education Programs and Scholarships

Anheuser-Busch Presents Event for Eighth Year

(ST. LOUIS, MO) COCAcabana 2018: *Show Your Stripes*, Center of Creative Arts' annual spring fundraising event, raised \$860,000 on Friday, April 20, exceeding its goal. COCA, the fourth largest multidisciplinary community arts center in the country, relies upon this yearly event to sustain its programming in University City and throughout the St. Louis community. With a core value of accessibility, COCA annually provides nearly \$1 million in arts education programming at no cost to thousands of students in low-income schools and communities around St. Louis, plus nearly 300 scholarships and support services for students to participate in programs on-site at COCA.

The event, usually held on-site at COCA, was at The Ritz-Carlton St. Louis to accommodate construction at the COCA building – a result of Create Our Future, a \$40 million capital campaign to renovate and expand COCA's historic building and raise capital reserves and endowment funds.

This year's COCAcabana theme, *Show Your Stripes*, dictated the décor and dress, but beyond that, it was a salute to the thousands of COCA kids who show their stripes every day – coming to COCA from over 220 different zip codes to develop important life-long skills through training in the arts. At COCA, everyone is free to truly be themselves and express their individual talents.

"We were so pleased to have hosted 650 people at COCAcabana this year," said Kelly Pollock, COCA Executive Director, "and to have had the support of our Presenting Sponsor, Anheuser-Busch, for the eighth year in a row. We are grateful to all of our generous supporters who value COCA's role in this community. Funds raised through COCAcabana help students attend COCA classes regardless of financial means and bring arts programs to area schools that would otherwise not have these opportunities."

Guests were treated to performances from COCA students, live music from Fat Pocket, live and silent auctions, and a champagne raffle for a custom piece of jewelry from Elleard Heffern. Also, back for the third year in a row was the exclusive Table 1 – a VIP experience, including perks for 10 guests.

PHOTOS:

Event photos available at:

https://www.facebook.com/pg/COCAstl/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10156433258502028

LEADERSHIP:

Honorary Chairs: Susan & Joe Werner; Event Chairs: Lauren & Ward Brown, Kim Kuehner, Dana & Ron Redwing, Susie & Jonathan Sachs

SPONSORS:

Presenting: Anheuser-Busch; Lead Scholarship: Centene Charitable Foundation, Express Scripts, McCormack Baron Salazar, Wells Fargo Advisors; VIP Reception: U.S. Bank; Band: Edward Jones; Cocktail: Stifel; Dinner: Ameren; Striped Carpet: Dielmann Sotheby's International Realty; VIP Kickoff: Kim Kuehner and Elleard Heffern Fine Jewelers; Live Auction: Thomas R. Green Family Foundation; Valet: Rent-A-Relative and Pattering Paws; Dessert: PNC Bank; Travel: Enterprise Bank & Trust; Travel Concierge: SmartFlyer, Betsey & Hunter Brown, Melissa & Rob Merlin; VIP Wine: Dierberg Estate Vineyard; Media Partner: Town & Style; Art Direction & Design: Cannonball Advertising & Promotion; Bar: Major Brands and Pernod Ricard;

Performance: Lewis & Clark Ventures; Friend of the Arts: Switch; Table One: Ash Leonard Design LLC; Technology: Boeing; Lounge: CI Select; Production: Touchwood Creative; Gold: Butler's Pantry; Champagne: Regions Bank; Silver: Argent Capital, CSI Leasing, First Bank, Marc Christian Fine Cabinetry, Mercy, Monsanto, Saint Louis University, Tarlow Family Foundation, TW Constructors, U.S. Trust Bank of America, Washington University in St. Louis, World Wide Technology; Bronze: Bryan Cave, Emerson, Gershman Mortgage, Thompson Coburn.

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ABOUT ANHEUSER-BUSCH

For more than 100 years, Anheuser-Busch and the Anheuser-Busch Foundation have reached out to groups in need, contributing to community organizations across the country and touching countless individual lives. For more information, visit www.anheuser-busch.com.

ABOUT COCA

Founded in 1986, COCA is the fourth largest multidisciplinary community arts center in the country, one of only 16 schools in the nation accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Precollegiate Arts Schools (ACCPAS), and a national leader in innovative arts education. With a mission to enrich lives and build community through the arts, COCA serves 50,000 people of all ages and skill levels, from enthusiastic amateurs to emerging professionals—all taught by a faculty of distinguished arts educators. We provide meaningful arts experiences in our own studios, gallery and theatres as well as in schools, community centers and corporate settings in order to build a vibrant St. Louis that is creative, connected and inclusive. Visit www.cocastl.org to learn more.