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Genius Brands Promotes Industry Leader Kerry Phelan to Chief Brand Officer as Company Further Builds Global Franchise Programs

Phelan to Drive Brand Growth on Worldwide Scale Across All Genius Brands' Businesses, Including WOW! Unlimited Media, Inc., Your Family Entertainment and Ameba TV

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif., Jan. 26, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Following Genius Brands' acquisitions of Canada's **WOW! Unlimited Media, Inc.** (WOW!) and **Ameba TV**, and major investment in Germany's **Your Family Entertainment** (YFE) to build a global footprint, as well as the worldwide rollout of **Kartoon Channel! /Kartoon Channel! Kidaverse**, **Genius Brands International, Inc.** ("Genius Brands" or the "Company") (Nasdaq: GNUS), announces the promotion of **Kerry Phelan** to the newly created position of **Chief Brand Officer**.



Phelan joined Genius Brands in July 2021 as Executive Vice President & General Manager of Global Franchise Management after serving for 30 years in consumer products & retail executive roles at studios, including **Lucasfilm Ltd.**, **DreamWorks Animation** and **Pixar**, building global campaigns for multi-billion dollar brands, including the **Star Wars** and **Cars** franchises, as well as **Shrek**, **Kung Fu Panda**, and **Madagascar**, among many others.

As the company has expanded significantly over the past year with multiple acquisitions, her role is expanding to include global brand building across all Genius Brands' businesses. As Chief Brand Officer, Phelan will build out a 360° ecosystem with multiple consumer touchpoints while driving significant incremental revenue for the company. She will be responsible for overall global brand strategy, consumer products, brand partnerships & collaborations, brand experiences, retail development and more for Genius Brands' roster of kid's properties, including ***Stan Lee's Superhero Kindergarten***, ***Shaq's Garage***, ***Stan Lee Universe***, ***Rainbow Rangers***, among others in development.

"It's a tremendous privilege for us to have an executive of Kerry's caliber, with her successful track record of launching some of the most successful brands in entertainment history, from ***Star Wars*** to ***Cars***, leading the charge as we continue to launch new IP into the market and rollout existing brands on a global scale," stated **Heyward**. "Genius Brands is experiencing its most significant growth to date with our slate of acquisitions further bolstering our content catalogue and giving us a greater worldwide footprint, and we are in a solid position to take our company to the next level and achieve our goals of delivering quality children's franchise to the marketplace and revenue to our shareholders."

"In less than a year of joining Genius Brands, I am excited to be a part of a company that is leading the charge in the kid's space to deliver innovative, purpose-driven brands to the marketplace while building a global platform to reach kids anywhere, anytime with quality content. It is truly amazing to be a part of the team at Genius Brands and to play a role in the growth of the company. I look forward to the years ahead as we continue to build our brands and platform on a global scale," said **Phelan**.

After she successfully launched the *Star Wars* brand at LEGO Systems Inc., Phelan was recruited directly to Lucasfilm Ltd. where she led the global consumer products & promotional licensing business for the multi-billion-dollar *Star Wars* franchise in over 60 countries worldwide. She then joined Pixar Animation Studios, reporting directly to Steve Jobs, where she launched, in concert with Disney Consumer Products, the original *Cars* consumer product program, which became a top tier, blockbuster franchise. Following Pixar, Phelan spent seven years at DreamWorks Animation as head of consumer products and licensing, driving the development of franchise management plans for the studio's film and television properties, including *Shrek*, *Madagascar*, *Kung Fu Panda*, *How to Train Your Dragon* & others. At DreamWorks, she managed the retail consumer products business and doubled the consumer products revenue in just three years. Most recently, she served as President of Global Franchise Management at Lionsgate Entertainment, where under her leadership, the studio created brand extensions spanning location-based and live entertainment venues, consumer products, brand partnerships and an array of promotional ventures for such blockbuster franchises as *The Hunger Games* and *John Wick*.

About Genius Brands International

Genius Brands International, Inc. (Nasdaq: GNUS) is a leading global kids media company developing, producing, marketing and licensing branded children's entertainment properties and consumer products for media and retail distribution. The Company's 'content with a purpose' portfolio includes *Stan Lee's Superhero Kindergarten*, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, on Kartoon Channel!; *Shaq's Garage*, starring Shaquille O'Neal on Kartoon Channel!; *Rainbow Rangers* on Kartoon Channel! and Netflix; *Llama Llama*, starring Jennifer Garner, on Netflix; award-winning toddler brand *Baby Genius*; adventure comedy

STEM series *Thomas Edison's Secret Lab*; and entrepreneurship series *Warren Buffett's Secret Millionaires Club*. Through licensing agreements with leading partners, characters from Genius Brands' IP also appear on a wide range of consumer products for the worldwide retail marketplace. The Company's Kartoon Channel! and Kartoon Classroom! are available in over 100 million U.S. television households via a broad range of distribution platforms, including Comcast, Cox, DISH, Sling TV, Amazon Prime, Amazon Fire, Apple TV, Apple iOS, Android TV, Android Mobil, Google Play, Xumo, Roku, Tubi, YouTube, KartoonChannel.com, Samsung Smart TVs and LG TVs. For additional information, please visit www.gnusbrands.com.

Forward Looking Statements: Certain statements in this press release constitute "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the federal securities laws. Words such as "may," "might," "will," "should," "believe," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "continue," "predict," "forecast," "project," "plan," "intend" or similar expressions, or statements regarding intent, belief, or current expectations, are forward-looking statements. While the Company believes these forward-looking statements are reasonable, undue reliance should not be placed on any such forward-looking statements, which are based on information available to us on the date of this release. These forward looking statements are based upon current estimates and assumptions and are subject to various risks and uncertainties, including without limitation, our ability to generate revenue or achieve profitability; our ability to obtain additional financing on acceptable terms, if at all; the potential issuance of a significant number of shares, which will dilute our equity holders; fluctuations in the results of our operations from period to period; general economic and financial conditions; our ability to anticipate changes in popular culture, media and movies, fashion and technology; competitive pressure from other distributors of content and within the retail market; our reliance on and relationships with third-party production and animation studios; our ability to market and advertise our products; our reliance on third-parties to promote our products; our ability to keep pace with technological advances; our ability to protect our intellectual property and those other risk factors set forth in the "Risk Factors" section of the Company's most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and in the Company's subsequent filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"). Thus, actual results could be materially different. The Company expressly disclaims any obligation to update or alter statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as required by law.

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at
<https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/9d33d70a-bf7c-4632-b65d-93430e793988>

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