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# Pioneering Celebrity Chef Wolfgang Puck Partners with Genius Brands to Create WOLFGANG PUCK'S SECRET CHEF ACADEMY

**Original IP for Children Features an Animated Adventure Series, Starring Puck, a Global Licensing, Merchandise & Retail Program, Promotional Initiatives, a Subscription Box Service and More**

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif., June 24, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- World-renowned chef, restaurateur, entrepreneur and philanthropist **Wolfgang Puck** is expanding his global empire in a partnership with **Genius Brands International, Inc.** ("Genius Brands" or the "Company") (NASDAQ: GNUS), to create an all-new children's brand, **Wolfgang Puck's Secret Chef Academy**, for the worldwide marketplace.



Wolfgang Puck is considered the most iconic chef of our time. He has led a trailblazing life, feeding his gourmet creations to kings, queens, presidents, and movie stars. He has opened world class restaurants and worked passionately for his charities. Throughout it all, Puck has learned that food is the universal language; that a good meal can bring people of different backgrounds and cultures together; and most importantly, that any dream can be accomplished with hard work and determination. These values are the foundation of *Wolfgang Puck's Secret Chef Academy*.



*Wolfgang Puck's Secret Chef Academy* will feature an animated adventure series (52 x 11 episodes) that stars Puck voicing his own character. Creatively collaborating with Puck, Genius Brands is also developing a global licensing, merchandising, promotions and retail program that will feature themed subscription boxes containing lots of fun recipes from all different types of cuisine for kids to create; a line of branded merchandise for children in categories, including publishing, cooking tools, apparel, home goods, among others; a new private food label for kids; a dedicated YouTube channel featuring short-form content; a dedicated website and social media channels; and much more!

**Wolfgang Puck** stated: "*Wolfgang Puck's Secret Chef Academy* is at its core a celebration of food and culture around the world, and an exploration of how we are all connected through our shared love of eating a delicious meal. I am extremely passionate and committed to teaching kids and parents about nutrition and the value of cooking meals with healthy ingredients. Equally important is helping reinforce their understanding of how food goes from farm to table and touching on issues near and dear to my heart such as the elimination of global hunger. Our goal is to deliver these increasingly important messages in an easy to understand and entertaining manner. I look forward to working with my friend Andy Heyward and the Genius Brands team to fulfill a lifelong dream of reaching kids through my life's work."

"I have had the privilege of knowing Wolfgang for many years and have been fortunate enough to experience his culinary magic from the beginning. I have always wanted to collaborate with him on a children's project. His level of skill, passion, creativity and commitment is truly unparalleled," said **Genius Brands Chairman & CEO Andy Heyward**. "Our goal for *Wolfgang Puck's Secret Chef Academy* is to create an atmosphere of 'James Bond meets Julia Child' with a state of the art kitchen and supersonic gadgets, all while highlighting the importance of health, nutrition and sustainability through our storylines and characters' journeys. We are creating a one-of-a-kind immersive experience through entertainment and merchandise for worldwide distribution."

**Genius Brands Chief Brand Officer Kerry Phelan** commented: "*Wolfgang Puck's Secret*

*Chef Academy* is Inspired by Wolfgang's global brand recognition, and it is incredibly important to us that we create a brand that honors his vision of delivering an experience that celebrates cuisine around the globe and teaches kids to respect and be inspired by different cultures. We truly believe the next generation will fall in love with food, friendship and family and will learn that there is nothing better than a shared meal to bring people together!"

### **About Wolfgang Puck's Secret Academy**

World famous chef Wolfgang Puck has a lot on his plate. Besides running an international culinary empire, he is on a mission to create the greatest recipe book of all time, the quintessential cookbook of the most delectable dishes ever prepared on Planet Earth - *Wolfgang Puck's Global Guide to Gastronomy!*

Wolfgang has enlisted the help of five talented kid chefs, *'Wolf's Gang,'* who attend the famous "4-S", his *Secret Spago School of Scrumptious*, in the basement of his flagship restaurant. Wolf sends them on missions around the world to procure iconic recipes that represent the culture and soul of the places they visit.

But each trip quickly becomes a madcap adventure when Wolfgang's longtime rival, *Foxgang Muck*, sabotages them at every turn. Wolf's Gang must outsmart *"the Fox"*, secure the recipe and key ingredient, and get back to Spago in time for dinner service. Bon appetit... now let's dig in!

### **About Wolfgang Puck**

The name Wolfgang Puck is synonymous with the best of restaurant hospitality and the ultimate in all aspects of the culinary arts. The famed chef has built a brand that encompasses three companies: Wolfgang Puck Fine Dining Group, Wolfgang Puck Catering, and Wolfgang Puck Worldwide, Inc.

Puck began cooking as a child, at his mother's side. She was a chef in the Austrian town where he was born, and with her encouragement, Wolfgang started his formal training at fourteen years of age. As a young chef he worked in some of France's greatest restaurants, including Maxim's in Paris, the Hotel de Paris in Monaco, and the Michelin 3-starred L'Oustau de

Baumanière in Provence. At the age of 24, Wolfgang took the advice of a friend and left Europe for the United States. His first job was at the restaurant La Tour in Indianapolis, where he worked from 1973 to 1975.

In 1975, Wolfgang came to Los Angeles and very quickly garnered the attention of the Hollywood elite as chef of Ma Maison in West Hollywood. His dynamic personality and culinary brilliance that bridged tradition and invention made Ma Maison a magnet for the rich and famous, with Wolfgang as the star attraction. He had an innate understanding of the potential for California cuisine, and was pivotal in its rise to national attention during the late 1970s.

### **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 IP portfolio of family-friendly content features the *Stan Lee* brand, *Stan Lee's Superhero Kindergarten*,

starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, on Kartoon Channel!; Shaq's Garage, starring Shaquille O'Neal, coming to Kartoon Channel!; *Rainbow Rangers* on Kartoon Channel! and Netflix; *Llama Llama*, starring Jennifer Garner, on Netflix and more. Recently, Genius Brands entered into an agreement to acquire Canada's WOW! Unlimited Media (TSX-V: WOW), which includes 2,500 channels under the Channel Federator Network, and has also made a strategic investment in Germany's Your Family Entertainment AG (FRA:RTV), one of Europe's largest distributors and broadcasters of high-quality programs for children and families.

Genius Brands' Kartoon Channel! is a globally distributed entertainment platform with 100% penetration in the U.S. television market and international expansion with launches in key markets around the world. The channel is available in the U.S. via a broad range of distribution platforms, including Comcast, Cox, DISH, Amazon Prime, Amazon Fire, Apple TV, Apple iOS, Android TV, Android Mobil, Google Play, Roku, YouTube, KartoonChannel.com, Samsung Smart and LG TVs, the JetBlue Inflight platform and more. Genius Brands is now rolling out the subscription-based Kartoon Channel! Kidaverse, featuring metaversal content and exclusive titles.

For additional information, please visit [www.gnusbrands.com](http://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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Photos accompanying this announcement are available at

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