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Genius Brands International Appoints Key Licensing Partner to Drive Worldwide Expansion of New Preschool Brand, Rainbow Rangers

Imprint at Macmillan Children's Publishing Group Named Global Master Publishing Partner

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif., Dec. 12, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Genius Brands International, Inc. "Genius Brands" (NASDAQ:GNUS) continues to build the global licensing, merchandising and retail program for its highly-anticipated preschool series, *Rainbow Rangers*, with the appointment of the new master publishing partner for the brand, **Imprint, a part of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group**.



Genius Brands International, (NASDAQ: GNUS) continues to build the global licensing, merchandising and retail program for its highly-anticipated preschool series, *Rainbow Rangers*, with the appointment of the new master publishing partner for the brand, Imprint, a part of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group. The *Rainbow Rangers* series, which is slated to premiere in fall 2018 on the #1 rated kids' network, Nickelodeon's Nick Jr., follows the thrilling rescue-based adventures of seven 9-year-old girls who are Earth's first responders – protecting people, animals, resources, and the natural beauty of our world.

A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/180f0632-e024-466b-83bd-dc8c147784b3>

As global master publishing partner, Macmillan Children's Publishing Group's **Imprint** team will develop a wide-ranging line of books, including picture books, leveled readers, story and board books for anticipated release in 2019. **Imprint** joins a growing list of previously announced top-tier licensees, including **Mattel, Inc.** (master toy), **Bentex** (master apparel), **Handcraft Manufacturing** (packaged underwear), **Global Design Concepts** (bags, backpacks), **Jay Franco** (bedding and bath), **H.E.R. Accessories** (jewelry and hair accessories) and **TASTE Beauty** (healthy and beauty). The company anticipates the retail program to begin rolling out in the U.S. in late spring 2019, continuing through back-to-school and holiday. Currently in production on season one (52 x 11' episodes), the CGI-animated series, *Rainbow Rangers*, is slated to premiere in fall 2018 on the #1 rated kids' network, **Nickelodeon's Nick Jr.**

"We could not be more pleased with the level of genuine enthusiasm we have received from the licensing industry for *Rainbow Rangers*, who recognize that we have created a truly special concept that lends itself to a robust retail program," said Genius Brand's SVP of Global Consumer Products Lloyd Mintz. "The brand captures the essence of preschool girls with fun mission-based adventures while promoting empowerment, diversity, inclusivity, environmental responsibility and more, and we look forward to working with Imprint and Macmillan Children's Publishing Group and our other best-in-class licensing, retail and broadcast partners worldwide to bring the magic of the *Rainbow Rangers* to young fans around the world."

"*Rainbow Rangers* is a show based in friendship, with wonderful storytelling layering in diversity environmental awareness, responsibility and exciting adventures. The show is also colorful and full of joy. I am thrilled to be partnering with Genius Brands to translate the empowering themes of the brand into books that will be adapted from the show, and also feature original stories," said Erin Stein, Publisher at Imprint.

The *Rainbow Rangers* series follows the thrilling rescue-based adventures of seven 9-year-old girls who are Earth's first responders – protecting people, animals, resources, and the natural beauty of our world. The girls have their own distinctive personalities and superpowers, and they live in the magical land of Kaleidoscopia at the other side of the rainbow! Whenever there's trouble for the people or animals of Earth, our seven heroines zoom into action and ride their Spectra scooters across the rainbow to save the day. We'll join them on exciting adventures, but also see them at home having the same daily dramas and hilarities as every preschooler watching the show. And at its heart, *Rainbow Rangers* is about empowering and encouraging girls to take action and make a difference in their own homes and neighborhoods to improve and safeguard the planet. Every viewer -- boys and girls -- will see themselves in at least one of these strong, unique and empowered Rangers!

Boasting a unique and highly-accomplished team of creators from the animated motion picture world, *Rainbow Rangers*' creative development and production team includes Rob Minkoff (*Disney's The Lion King* director), Shane Morris (*Disney's Frozen* co-writer), Tim Mansfield and New York Times Bestselling author and Emmy-nominated writer Elise Allen (*Dinosaur Train*, *Lion Guard*, *Barbie specials*) who is serving as head writer and co-creator. Genius Brands' Chairman and CEO and multiple Emmy-winning producer of more than

5,000 episodes of children's programming Andy Heyward serves as executive producer, with legendary Disney alum Ruben Aquino creating key designs. Aquino is responsible for the design and animation of many of Disney's most iconic characters from award-winning films including "The Lion King," "Beauty and the Beast," "The Little Mermaid," "Mulan" and "Frozen."

About Genius Brands International

Headquartered in Beverly Hills, California, Genius Brands International, Inc. (NASDAQ: GNUS) is a leading global media company developing, producing, marketing and licensing branded children's entertainment properties and consumer products for media distribution and retail channels. Led by award-winning creators and producers, Genius Brands distributes its content worldwide in all formats, as well as a broad range of consumer products based on its characters. In the children's media sector, its portfolio of "content with a purpose" includes new preschool properties *Rainbow Rangers* for Nick Jr. and *Llama Llama* for Netflix; tween music-driven, YouTube brand *SpacePOP*; award-winning toddler brand *Baby Genius*; adventure comedy series *Thomas Edison's Secret Lab*, and Warren Buffett's *Secret Millionaires Club*, created with and starring iconic investor Warren Buffett. The Company is also co-producing an all-new adult animated series, *Stan Lee's Cosmic Crusaders*, with Stan Lee's Pow! Entertainment and The Hollywood Reporter. Genius Brands' *Kid Genius Cartoon Channel* is currently available in approximately 60 million households via Comcast and OTT platforms and *Kid Genius Cartoons Plus!*, which is now available to Amazon Prime subscribers. For additional information please visit www.gnusbrands.com.

About Macmillan Children's Publishing Group

Macmillan Children's Publishing Group comprises Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers, Feiwel and Friends, First Second, Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, Imprint, Priddy Books, Roaring Brook Press, Square Fish, and Swoon Reads. These imprints are home to award-winning, *New York Times* bestselling authors including Madeleine L'Engle, Natalie Babbitt, Roald Dahl, Jack Gantos, Nancy Tillman, Catherynne M. Valente, Marissa Meyer, Paul Pope, Gene Luen Yang, Eric Carle, Leigh Bardugo, Lane Smith, Nick Bruel, Erin E. Stead, Philip C. Stead, and hundreds more popular authors and illustrators. Macmillan Children's Publishing Group is proud to publish many of the classics of children's literature including *A Wrinkle in Time*, *Tuck Everlasting*, *The Black Cauldron*, *A Cricket in Times Square*, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*, and *The BFG*, as well as popular new classics *Speak*, *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*, *Dead End in Norvelt*, *On the Night You Were Born*, and *Bad Kitty*.

Forward-Looking Statements:

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 those set forth in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year

ended December 31, 2016, under the heading "Risk Factors," and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"), not limited to risk factors relating to its patent business contained therein. 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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