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# **Genius Brands International Engages Founder & CEO of Fox Kids as Executive Chairman of Kid Genius Cartoon Channel**

**Iconic Children's Broadcaster Margaret Loesch to Advise On Kid Genius Cartoon Channel**

**Deb Pierson Promoted to President of Rapidly Growing Video On Demand Channel, Currently Available in 50 Million U.S. Households**

BEVERLY HILLS, CA -- (Marketwired) -- 12/19/16 -- Genius Brands International, Inc. "Genius Brands" (NASDAQ: GNUS) has engaged multiple award-winning children's and family media executive Margaret Loesch as Executive Chairman of its *Kid Genius Cartoon Channel*. Loesch will provide counsel to newly elevated channel President Deb Pierson, promoted from her role as General Manager, as she spearheads aggressive growth plans for the rapidly expanding platform.

In the newly created position of Executive Chairman of Genius Brands' *Kid Genius Cartoon Channel*, Ms. Loesch brings four decades of unparalleled success in all phases of children's broadcasting and family entertainment, creating value through some of the most successful kids networks. In addition, her proven track record for overseeing successful content has led to the development and/or production of some of the most iconic programs in children's television, including *Smurfs*, *My Little Pony*, *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*, *X-Men*, *Jim Henson's Muppet Babies*, *Animaniacs* and *Transformers*. Ms. Loesch will collaborate with Ms. Pierson to advise on the development of channel brand strategy, expand its coverage and build advertiser participation.

Shelly Hirsch, CEO of Beacon Media Group, the largest buyer of children's media commented, "For decades, Margaret has exemplified the 'best of the best' in the children's broadcast business. This is truly a feather in the cap for the *Kid Genius Cartoon Channel* and I look forward to seeing the tremendous growth opportunities that will no doubt transpire under her guidance."

"We are extraordinarily fortunate to have the dean of children's broadcasters, Margaret Loesch, expand on her role as a board member of Genius Brands International to join the *Kid Genius Cartoon Channel* as its Executive Chairman, given her outstanding background in creating and building successful kid's networks. As founder and CEO of Fox Kids Worldwide, she stewarded the Company until shortly before its sale to the Walt Disney Company for \$5.4 billion dollars and in her career, she has repeatedly generated success time and time again," said Andy Heyward, Chairman & CEO of Genius Brands.

"It is truly remarkable what Andy and the Genius Brands' team have accomplished with the *Kid Genius Cartoon Channel* in such a short amount of time," responded Ms. Loesch. "I joined the Company's board of directors last year because I believed in the mission and direction of the Company, and I am excited to provide insight and counsel in collaboration with Deb Pierson to build this video on demand channel into a leading global children's digital platform."

Former Kabillion executive Ms. Pierson joined Genius Brands in March 2016 as General Manager of the Kid Genius Cartoon Channel and has been responsible for growing the video on demand channel into nearly 50 million U.S. households. Ms. Pierson will continue to drive the expansion of the channel both domestically and internationally in collaboration with Ms. Loesch.

"There are tremendous opportunities for the channel to explore and I am honored to be working in a greater capacity in expanding the channel, and working with an executive of Margaret's stature, to make the *Kid Genius Cartoon Channel* into a #1 destination for kids," stated Ms. Pierson.

Throughout her formidable career, Ms. Loesch has held senior roles with numerous leading companies as both a creative and business executive. She was the founding President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hub TV Network, a multi-platform joint venture between Discovery Communications and Hasbro, Inc., and had oversight of all business and creative areas of the network. Ms. Loesch was also the first President and CEO of Crown Media United States, responsible for the creation of its U.S. cable television network, Hallmark Channel; and President of Television Worldwide for The Jim Henson Company, where she served as executive producer of *Bear in the Big Blue House*.

Ms. Loesch became the founding President and CEO of Fox Kids Network, Worldwide in 1990, which under her leadership expanded its dominant United States network into Latin America, Australia, and the United Kingdom, before eventually being sold to the Walt Disney Company for \$5.4 billion dollars. Prior to that she was President and CEO of Marvel Comics' film production arm, Marvel Productions, where she executive produced multiple hit series, including *G.I. Joe*, *Transformers*, *Jem and the Holograms*, *Dungeons and Dragons*, *My Little Pony* and *Jim Henson's Muppet Babies*.

Among Ms. Loesch's industry awards are multiple Emmy® Awards, a George Foster Peabody Award, a CableFAX Most Powerful Women in Cable Award, a CableFAX 100 Award, an International Film Festival (IFFF) Film Excellence Award, a Vision Award, the prestigious Chair Award from the Caucus for Television Producers, Writers, and Directors, and a career lifetime achievement honor from the Cynopsis Kids Imagination Awards.

Ms. Pierson brings over 25 years of experience in children's entertainment experience, including almost six years as Vice President of Sales and Marketing for multiplatform kids' entertainment channel, Kabillion. Prior to Kabillion, Pierson served as Vice President of Specialty Merchandise for *Neopets*, where she created the independent retailer merchandise and licensing strategy for the brand, bringing *Neopets* to market for their 25 million registered users and leading the product development, manufacturing, licensing and sales for the Neopets' Specialty Merchandise division.

The Kid Genius Cartoon Channel is currently available on Comcast's Xfinity on Demand

platform, as well as across OTT (over-the-top) platforms, including Roku, Apple, Amazon, Sony, Google and Samsung with additional platforms to follow. The channel offers a variety of programming for young viewers (toddlers to age 12) that is aligned with Genius Brands' mission to provide "content with a purpose," featuring original programming such as *Baby Genius*, *SpacePOP*, Warren Buffett's *Secret Millionaires Club* and *Thomas Edison's Secret Lab*, as well as shows from other program creators around the world such as *Eddie Is A Yeti* and *Nancy Drew Codes & Clues*.

### ***About Genius Brands International***

Headquartered in Beverly Hills, California, Genius Brands International, Inc. (NASDAQ: GNUS) is a publicly traded global brand management company that creates and licenses multimedia content for children. Led by award-winning creators and producers, the Company 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, Genius Brands' portfolio features "content with a purpose" for toddlers to tweens, which provides enrichment as well as entertainment, including new preschool property ***Rainbow Rangers***; tween music-driven brand ***SpacePOP***; preschool property ***Llama Llama*** to debut on Netflix; award-winning ***Baby Genius***, re-launched with new entertainment and over 40 new products; adventure comedy ***Thomas Edison's Secret Lab***, available on Netflix, public broadcast stations and the ***Kid Genius Cartoon Channel***; ***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. Additionally, under Genius Brands' wholly owned subsidiary, A Squared Entertainment, the Company represents third-party properties, including From Frank, a humor greeting card and product line, and *Celessence Technologies*, the world's leading micro encapsulation company, across a broad range of categories in territories around the world. 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 those set forth in the Company's 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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