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Genius Brands International and Alibaba Partner to Co-Produce the New Animated Children's Series, Stan Lee's Superhero Kindergarten, Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger

Alibaba's Youku Streaming Service to Bring Series Created by Legendary Stan Lee to China

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif., Oct. 14, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- **Genius Brands International** "Genius Brands" (NASDAQ: GNUS) announced today it has formed a strategic co-production partnership with Alibaba Group's (NYSE:BABA) video streaming platform, Youku, to co-produce the all-new children's animated series, ***Stan Lee's Superhero Kindergarten***, starring **Arnold Schwarzenegger**.

Genius Brands and Alibaba's Youku will co-produce 52 x 11 episodes of the comedy, action-adventure series, which will be available to Chinese audiences on Youku. Genius Brands is also currently in active discussions with potential U.S. partners and is debuting *Stan Lee's Superhero Kindergarten* to international buyers at this year's MIPJunior, a leading global kids entertainment industry event in Cannes, France.

Created by Stan Lee as one of his final projects, *Stan Lee's Superhero Kindergarten*, which targets kids ages 4 – 7, is also co-produced by Lee's POW! Entertainment, and Schwarzenegger's Oak Productions. Schwarzenegger, who also serves as executive producer, lends his voice as the lead character in the series. Co-creator of *Deadpool*, Fabian Nicieza, who has sold over 100 million comics worldwide, is scripting the series. Genius Brands' Chairman and CEO and multiple Emmy Award-winning producer of more than 5,000 episodes of children's programming Andy Heyward, Paul Wachter, CEO of Main Street Advisors, and President of POW! Entertainment Gill Champion also serve as executive producers.

"Youku is one of the most innovative media platforms in the world with an unparalleled ability to integrate entertainment and commerce," commented Andy Heyward, Chairman & CEO of Genius Brands. "We look forward to collaborating with Youku to create a high-quality program in the preschool space that will resonate with a global audience."

"With Stan Lee's creativity, Arnold Schwarzenegger's star power, and Genius Brands' expertise in children's entertainment, *Superhero Kindergarten* has all the elements to

become a worldwide phenomenon. With Youku's platform and technology, we are excited to help the program reach hundreds of millions of families in China and partner with Genius Brands to create this inspiring story for children around the world," stated Aaron Liao, General Manager of Youku Kids.

About Superhero Kindergarten

Five years ago, a tremendous superhero battle blanketed the small town of Greenvale in cosmic radiation. Shortly thereafter, a previously ordinary diverse group of boys and girls, are showing the most unusual superpowers! Their superpowers, however, rather than coming from Kryptonite, or a radioactive spider, come from items in their kindergarten classroom....white glue, wooden blocks, crayons, silly putty, etc.

A very special kindergarten teacher arrives in Greenvale to train these super-kids. Arnold Armstrong (Arnold Schwarzenegger) knows what it is like to control superpowers, because he used to be Captain Courage, the hero whose final battle resulted in the creation of the super-kids! Arnold will teach the kids how to become the heroes of tomorrow, once he teaches them how to tie their shoes! This is a series of action, comedy, and fun, based on the genius and imagination of the great creative icon, Stan Lee.

About Youku

Youku is a leading multi-screen online video sharing and streaming platform in China and forms a key part of Alibaba Group's digital media and entertainment business, under its "Double H" (Health and Happiness) strategy. Youku Kids offers high-quality programming, covering a comprehensive range of categories including animation series, nursery songs, puzzle games, e-books, and preschool education.

About Genius Brands International

Headquartered in Beverly Hills, 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" brand portfolio, which is led by award-winning creators and producers, includes preschool properties *Rainbow Rangers* for Nick Jr. and *Llama Llama* for Netflix; award-winning toddler brand, *Baby Genius*; adventure comedy STEM series, *Thomas Edison's Secret Lab*; and financial literacy and entrepreneurship series, *Warren Buffett's Secret Millionaires Club*. The Company's content catalog also includes the animated series, *Stan Lee's Cosmic Crusaders*, created with Stan Lee's Pow! Entertainment. Seeing the need to provide kids and parents with a safe viewing environment that offers premium enriching and engaging programming, Genius Brands launched the Genius Brands Network – comprised of *Kid Genius Cartoon Channel* and *Baby Genius TV*, as well as an exclusive *Kid Genius Cartoons Plus* subscription channel on Amazon Prime. The Network channels are available in approximately 80 million U.S. households via a variety of distribution platforms, such as OTT, set-top box, internet, and mobile. Through licensing agreements with category leading partners, characters from the Company's properties also appear on a wide range of consumer products for retail. For additional information, please visit www.gnusbrands.com.

About Stan Lee's POW! Entertainment

POW! Entertainment Inc. is a multimedia company founded in 2001 by the iconic comic book creator Stan Lee with his friend and business partner Gill Champion, who is the President today, to create and license intellectual properties for entertainment media, including:

feature-length films, television, merchandising, branded content and other related ancillary markets as well as exclusively maintain and protect the ownership of his name, likeness, voice, trademarks and publicity rights throughout the world. POW! Entertainment was acquired by Hong Kong-based Camsing International Holding Limited, one of China's leading brand licensing, entertainment, marketing, and promotion companies, in 2017. Under new leadership, another original founder and industry veterans from Marvel and MGM, POW! is working with top writers, artists, animators, filmmakers, and actors to extend the legacy of the greatest storyteller of our time.

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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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at
<https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/7a17e28e-f87e-4972-8b40-be5a7a2fc015>



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Source: Genius Brands International, Inc.