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Genius Brands Appoints Kerry Phelan as EVP & General Manager of Global Franchise Management to Drive Brand Development in the Retail Marketplace Worldwide

Former Consumer Products & Retail Executive at DreamWorks Animation and Pixar Built Global Campaigns for Multi-Billion Dollar Brands, Including the Star Wars and Cars Franchises

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif., July 06, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Continuing its mission to bring quality children's content and branded products to screens and shelves around the world, **Genius Brands International, Inc.** ("Genius Brands" or the "Company") (Nasdaq: GNUS), a global brand management company that creates and licenses multimedia entertainment content for children, announced today the appointment of **Kerry Phelan**, a 30-year consumer branding executive, to the newly created position of Executive Vice President & General Manager of Global Franchise Management. Phelan will report to both **Andy Heyward**, Chairman & CEO, and **Harold Chizick**, President of Global Content Sales, Marketing & Consumer Products.

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 totaling more than \$8B in retail sales. 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, licensed merchandise, brand partnerships and an array of promotional ventures for such blockbuster franchises as **The Hunger Games** and **Twilight**.

In her new role at Genius Brands, Phelan will be responsible for global management of the

Company's existing IP across licensing, merchandising, retail and promotions, including **Stan Lee's Superhero Kindergarten**, **Shaq's Garage**, **Stan Lee Universe**, and **Rainbow Rangers**, as well as properties currently in development.

"Kerry's pedigree and reputation in entertainment branding is unparalleled as she has driven the global revenue streams of some of the most lucrative franchises in history," stated **Chizick**. "In the coming year, we have multiple properties launching into the global retail marketplace, including *Stan Lee's Superhero Kindergarten*, which just premiered on Cartoon Channel!, as well as *Shaq's Garage* and *Stan Lee Universe* plus more categories coming to market around *Rainbow Rangers*. Kerry's leadership and strategic guidance will be instrumental in driving the growth of our brands around the world. She is a dream executive to have on board to help us achieve our long-term goals."

"The majority of my career has been spent building properties into global franchises, specifically in the children's space. Having had a peek at the coming pipeline, I am excited about the future at Genius Brands and the opportunity to build bigger brand ecosystems around their properties," said **Phelan**.

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 Cartoon Channel!; *Shaq's Garage*, starring Shaquille O'Neal on Cartoon Channel!; *Rainbow Rangers* on Cartoon 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 Cartoon Channel! and Cartoon 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, CartoonChannel.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/c0abd3d4-0eef-4680-afe4-d40e3b8a9fce>



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Source: Genius Brands International, Inc.