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K'NEX EMPLOYEES NAMED AS FINALISTS IN 9th ANNUAL STEVIE® AWARDS FOR WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Stevie Award Winners to Be Announced in New York on November 9

Hatfield, PA – October, 2012 – K'NEX, the only US [construction toy](#) company focused on [Building Worlds Kids Love®](#) is pleased to announce three finalists in the 9th annual Stevie® Awards for Women in Business; Barb Rentschler, Kristen Krikorian and Kate Loffio.

The Stevie Awards for Women in Business honor women executives, entrepreneurs, and the companies they run – worldwide. The Stevie Awards have been hailed as the world's premier business awards.

Nicknamed the Stevies for the Greek word “crowned,” Gold, Silver and Bronze Stevie Award winners will be announced during a gala event at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York on Friday, November 9. Nominated women executives and entrepreneurs from the U.S.A and several other countries are expected to attend.

More than 1,200 entries were submitted this year for consideration in more than 90 categories, including Executive of the Year, Entrepreneur of the Year, Women Helping Women, and Communications Campaign of the Year.

Barb Rentschler, Chief Marketing Officer and Vice President of Global Marketing, is a finalist in the Female Executive of the Year—Consumer Products category. In 2011-12 Barb directed three key marketing initiatives that ultimately led to this nomination: the K'NEX 20th anniversary promotion plan, the Gold Stevie Award winning Mario Kart Wii consumer launch and a Philadelphia Eagles/Angry Birds/K'NEX promotion to support all three brands. Beyond typical brand management, Barb oversaw implementation of a freight forwarding service that enables consumers around the world to purchase sets directly from [knex.com](#), supporting the company's goal of expanding the brand around the world. Barb joined K'NEX in 2002 and boasts a broad and varied background ranging from classic consumer package goods marketing, to business-to-business marketing, to strategic alliances.



Kristen Krikorian, Brand Manager for K'NEX Nintendo® & NASCAR® product, is a finalist in the Communications or PR campaign of the Year—Marketing—Consumer Products category. Through a collaborative partnership with Nintendo, Kristen and K'NEX created engaging and innovative Mario Kart Wii® building sets and brought them successfully to market in six short months. Recognized by children everywhere, the K'NEX Mario Kart Wii building sets bring popular and recognizable characters to life in a new way! Supported by Nintendo with e-mail blasts and viral videos, Kristen spearheaded an innovative and integrated public relations and marketing campaign. Kristen has been



with K'NEX since 2007 and in addition to Nintendo has worked with some of the country's leading brands including NASCAR and Lincoln Logs®. She also offers marketing support to national retail chains, such as Toys 'R' Us®, Walgreens®, CVS®, Dollar General® and more.

Kate Loffio, Marketing Communications Specialist, is a finalist in the Employee of the Year category. Since joining K'NEX in December 2011, Kate has been instrumental in generating awareness of the K'NEX Brand and its "Made in America" initiatives within its key audience and beyond. Going further than the usual press release and toy test, Kate has leveraged her relationships with key media contacts to create a step change in K'NEX media outreach. Because of her efforts and expertise, K'NEX has been featured on CNBC®, HISTORY Channel®, WFMZ®, TODAY SHOW®, WPVI-ABC® and consumer and trade magazines such as Parents Magazine®, Good Housekeeping®, Licensing Book®, Toy Book® and



more. Prior to joining K'NEX, Kate handled web communications, PR& brand management for International Playthings and worked in television production at The Montel Williams Show®, Plus Media® and others.

"K'NEX is thrilled for Barb, Kristen and Kate and, personally, I am honored to work side-by-side with these creative, inspiring women every day," said Michael Araten, K'NEX Brands CEO and president. "Their dedication to their craft is evident in everything they do and the Stevie Award nomination is a true testament to their hard work."

Finalists were chosen by more than 130 business professionals worldwide during preliminary judging. More than 90 members of the five final judging committees will determine the Gold, Silver and Bronze Stevie Award placements from among the Finalists during final judging.

"We're very excited about this year's Finalists in the Stevie Awards for Women in Business," said Michael Gallagher, founder and president of the Stevie Awards. "The judges have told me that they think this is the best and most inspiring crop of nominees we've ever had. We look forward to seeing the judges' final decisions."

Details about the Stevie Awards for Women in Business and the list of Finalists in all categories are available at www.StevieAwards.com/Women.

About K'NEX Brands

Founded in 1992, K'NEX Brands, the world's most innovative construction toy company, was established to make and sell what has become one of the world's leading integrated construction systems for children. Winner of over 200 international awards and recognitions, K'NEX is America's [building toy](#) company focused on [Building Worlds Kids Love](#), and encourages youngsters to "imagine, build and play." Since 1992, The Rodon Group, a subsidiary of K'NEX Brands, L.P., has manufactured over 30 billion parts for the K'NEX building toy system. For more information, please visit www.knex.com or www.rodongroup.com.

About The Stevie Awards

Stevie Awards are conferred in four programs: The American Business Awards, The International Business Awards, the Stevie Awards for Women in Business, and the Stevie Awards for Sales & Customer Service. Honoring organizations of all types and sizes and the people behind them, the Stevies recognize outstanding performances in the workplace worldwide. Learn more about the Stevie Awards at www.StevieAwards.com.

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