



Vera Bradley

March 8, 2017

Vera Bradley to Sponsor New Reality Entrepreneur Competition *Girl Starter*, Premiering April 28 at 7:00pm on TLC

Vera Bradley Founder Barbara Baekgaard to Appear as Special Guest Judge Advising Aspiring Female Entrepreneurs

NEW YORK, March 08, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Vera Bradley (Nasdaq:VRA), the iconic accessories and lifestyle brand, announced today it will sponsor *Girl Starter's* new reality TV entrepreneur competition premiering April 28 at 7:00pm on TLC.

Girl Starter is a transmedia and technology company that amplifies girls in entrepreneurship and business leadership. The digital platform, www.GirlStarter.com, launched today to coincide with International Women's Day ahead of the new TLC TV show premiere, the cast of which will begin a 10-city tour in May.

Vera Bradley is the designer of women's handbags, luggage and travel items created for women, by women who see being female as an advantage. *Girl Starter* shares Vera Bradley's objective of providing beautiful solutions that help women connect to their femininity and to each other. Vera Bradley Co-Founder Barbara Baekgaard commented, "Last year Vera Bradley launched its 'It's Good to be a Girl' campaign, meant to demonstrate that femininity has real value. *Girl Starter* exemplifies this spirit as it encourages the next wave of aspiring female entrepreneurs to succeed by providing business counsel and exposure, and for the winner, seed-round funding for her business start-up."

Girl Starter creator Julia Collins added, "The key to initiating change and increasing women's success is to reach girls while they are moldable. *Girl Starter* was born with the conviction that becoming a boss should be as fun as being one. There could not be a better aligned brand to sponsor our program than Vera Bradley and its Co-Founder Barbara Baekgaard, who share our philosophy."

GirlStarter.com is a dynamic platform that will leverage inspirational, actionable content to motivate girls and young women to build their own businesses. The TV show *Girl Starter* is an engaging, fast-paced business-genre reality-competition show that engages eight girls ages 18-24 as they compete for seed-round funding. The series follows six steps of early-phase business building from ideation through pitch with entertaining challenges, vibrant guest stars and judges, and a grand prize of up to \$100,000 of investment and services.

Baekgaard will appear as a guest judge in the fourth episode airing May 19.

Girl Starter will tour 10 cities along the east coast in May and June of 2017. The tour will include the opportunity to audition in person for Season 2. Tour details can be found on GirlStarter.com.

About Vera Bradley, Inc.

Vera Bradley is a leading designer of women's handbags, luggage and travel items, fashion and home accessories and unique gifts. Founded in 1982 by friends Barbara Bradley Baekgaard and Patricia R. Miller, the brand's innovative designs, iconic patterns and brilliant colors continue to inspire and connect women unlike any other brand in the global marketplace. The Company's commitment to bringing more beauty into women's lives includes its dedication to breast cancer research through the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer in which they have raised over \$28 million to date. For more information about Vera Bradley (Nasdaq:VRA), visit www.verabradley.com/mediaroom.

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