



## NEWS RELEASE

### **BROWNSTONE BUDDIES™ SELECTED AS FAO SCHWARZ TOY AUDITION FINALISTS**

**Brooklyn, N.Y. (February 23, 2007).** Crystal Granderson-Reid and Janai (pronounced **jen-AY**) Nelson are the creators of Brownstone Buddies™, a new line of trendsetting dolls that embody a fresh approach to play and learning in a multi-cultural world. Brownstone Buddies™ was selected as a finalist in the FAO Schwarz Toy Auditions and will debut at FAO Schwarz this holiday season 2007. Brownstone Buddies™ is a group of friends who represent cultures from across the globe and shower children with beautiful images of themselves that counter stereotypes and inspire exploration of the world around them. These cloth dolls with unique features are meant to be the ultimate companion of the sophisticated preschooler.

“We are excited to bring Brownstone Buddies™ to the world and invite children to expand their minds through a celebration of diversity,” said Janai Nelson, co-creator of Brownstone Buddies. “Brownstone Buddies™ inspires a fun learning experience and affirms the beauty in all children in an increasingly global marketplace,” said Crystal Granderson-Reid, co-creator of Brownstone Buddies™.

Crystal, a stay-at-home mom, has 3 daughters (ages 5, 3, and 1) and a background in fashion and PR. Janai has 2 children (a 3 year-old son and 18 month-old daughter) and is a law professor. As mothers of young children and residents of an historic brownstone neighborhood in Brooklyn, they saw no products on the market that inspire children to explore the world culture they see around them everyday—so they decided to create them! The original spark for their company happened on rainy day in October 2003 while watching a TV show about mothers with amazing ideas. They started meeting once a week in the evening to discuss product creation, researched the market, and developed characters, back-stories and prototypes. They formed an LLC in 2004 and define their company as a boutique of creative, global, and trendsetting ideas for children’s educational and entertainment products.

Crystal and Janai were seeking the ideal home for their dolls and learned about the FAO Toy Auditions from Crystal’s mother-in-law. Launching at FAO Schwarz had long been an aspiration of the two creators and the May 2006 Toy Auditions helped them to realize this dream. They brought prototypes of Brownstone Buddies™ to the audition, along with a well-conceived vision of how their dolls and FAO Schwarz would be a perfect fit. They were chosen out of more than 200 entries and are currently working on the production of their dolls with FAO Schwarz.

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