Meredith Corporation Announces Winners of Good Impressions Program

Five BIPOC and/or LGBTQIA-Majority Owned Small Businesses Receive Pro Bono Ad Space and Marketing Consultation Services Valued at Approximately $100,000 Each

DES MOINES, Iowa, Nov. 23, 2021 /**PRNewswire**/ -- Meredith Corporation (NYSE:MDP) today announced five businesses owned by Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and/or LGBTQIA individuals as winners of its Good Impressions program. Each business will receive an award package of pro bono ad space and marketing consultation services from Meredith experts valued at approximately $100,000.

Good Impressions, launched in February 2021, is a meaningful way for Meredith to help bridge the economic gap for minority-owned businesses and advance diversity, equity and inclusion in the communities it serves. Award packages are based on the needs and goals of each small business and encompass various forms of assistance. This support may include video consultations with key representatives across Meredith, spanning business intelligence, research/insights, creative, and marketing experts; introductory meetings with editorial leads across print, digital and social media; and media customized for the individual business's critical needs.

"We are so pleased to announce and showcase these award winners just in time for Small Business Saturday. We encourage people to support these innovative businesses during this holiday shopping season and beyond," said Catherine Levene, President, Meredith National Media Group and Executive Sponsor of :BLACKPRINT, the employee resource group (ERG) representing Black voices at Meredith. "We look forward to sharing Meredith's extensive advertising and marketing resources to help them take their companies to the next level."

After an extensive evaluation process, a selection committee consisting of companywide business and ERG leaders selected these companies as the 2021 Good Impressions winners:

- **Shea Yeleen**, based in Washington, D.C. and owned by Rahama Wright, redefines beauty by aligning the nourishment of skin with empowerment of women across the globe. Each purchase of its handcrafted skincare products directly contributes to the empowerment of women in Ghana. Shea Yeleen pays its producers five times the local minimum wage. The company is committed to financial empowerment, community development, traditional processing methods, and ethically sourced organic and natural ingredients. Meredith will help this company build back stronger with communications to enhance its product awareness and mission, activation, and exposure with Meredith brands across the beauty space. "Winning the Good Impressions pro-bono media and marketing award will enable Shea Yeleen to amplify our brand, build meaningful relationships with new customers, boost direct-to-consumer sales, and continue uplifting our producers in Ghana," said Wright. "This investment in our business will have ripple effects on our suppliers creating living wage jobs and contributing to sustainability within our supply chain."
- **The Safety Pouch**, based in New Orleans, LA, and owned by David Price, stores all driving credentials in one place. During traffic stops, it minimizes movement, allows more visibility inside the vehicle, and gives drivers the option to keep their hands on the steering wheel. Use of this product reduces the possibility of misunderstandings between drivers and police, which often lead to unnecessary violence, shootings, and even deaths. The idea came to David as a teenager after he was given "The Talk" about how to stay safe in a society that disproportionately discriminates against young Black males. Meredith will help this company develop a comprehensive strategic plan focusing on maximizing brand awareness. "Being a part of Good Impressions will be life-changing," said Price. "Through Meredith's guidance,

mentorship and services, I am sure it will help us rapidly scale our brand and help us continue our work creating safer and more equitable interactions with law enforcement."

- **Madhu Chocolate** is an Indian-inspired bean-to-bar craft chocolate maker based out ofAustin, TX. Founders Harshit Gupta and Elliott Curelop started the business out of their kitchen in 2018 when Curelop decided to add Indian spice mixes to the bars he would make as a hobby. Within three years, Madhu Chocolate has grown from a small cottage food business to one of the fastest-growing chocolate-making businesses in the U.S. Named one of the best chocolates in America by FOOD & WINE Magazine, Madhu Chocolate ethically sources high quality cacao beans from Colombia. Through fair trade, it contributes to the prosperity of the farmers while helping eliminate slavery. Its production facility operates on 100 percent renewable wind energy and enacts an aggressive composting strategy in an ongoing effort to minimize its carbon footprint. Meredith will assist Madhu Chocolate with strategies for public relations, business, and marketing, combined with content creation and multi-platform ad campaigns. "This award means so much to us because it validates the uniqueness of our business concept and the quality of our products, said Gupta. "We have put our all into developing the flavors of our products to demonstrate that amazing chocolate doesn't have to be so Euro-centric in flavor, and it is very gratifying for us to know other people feel the same way."
- The mission of **Modi Toys**, based in Edison, NJ, and owned by siblings Avani Modi Sarkar and Viral Modi, is to spark curiosity about the Indian culture by putting meaningful toys, games and books in the hands of children around the world. Their business idea was inspired by their own children, in hopes of creating the type of toys and books that reflect their South Asian roots and Hindu faith. Each of the plush toys plays mantras respective to specific deities, sung by Indian artists. Select toys can be personalized with children's names in any language. Meredith will assist Modi Toys with marketing consultation, data analytics, and exposure. "Growing up in America, my brother and I always felt connected to our South Asian heritage. After becoming parents however, we realized we lacked the resources to cultivate the same sense of connection for our own children," said Sarkar. "We searched for toys that reflected our roots, but we couldn't find anything that reflected diversity in faith. We designed our products as part of a broader movement to make playrooms more inclusive and celebrate individuality and otherness. We are so grateful to the Meredith team for creating this initiative and taking proactive steps to help minority owned small businesses make not just a good impression -- but a lasting one."
- **Young King Hair Care**, based in Atlanta, GA, and owned by Cora Miller and Stefan Miller, is the first multicultural beauty brand for young men. Inspired by their son, the company creates clean products to promote textured hair health and growth. The Millers founded the company with the mission of redefining male grooming for the next generation by encouraging young men of color to show up with full confidence and take pride in their self-care. All products are plant-based, free from harmful ingredients, and incorporate scents that appeal to young men. Meredith will assist Young King Hair Care with brand building, marketing strategy, partnerships, and exposure to Meredith brands. "This award truly validates our mission and vision for the brand," said Stefan Miller. "We are excited to tap into Meredith's bench of experts to garner insights, make valuable connections and utilize their skills and expertise, which is invaluable for our growing brand. We are thrilled to make new connections and truly learn and grow throughout the process."

According to the MetLife and U.S. Chamber Special Report on Race and Inequality on Main Street, published in August 2020, minority-owned small businesses have been disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus and the accompanying economic fallout. According to polling conducted for the report, two in three (66%) of minority-owned small businesses were concerned about having to permanently close versus 57% for non-minority small businesses. Minority-owned businesses are also slightly more likely to report trying and failing to secure a loan to help survive the economic turmoil (14% versus 8% of non-minority-owned businesses) linked to the coronavirus.

The Good Impressions program was founded by employees Sharuq Alam and Peachy-Jean Retizos. Inspired by Meredith's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, they knew that the company could make a difference for these businesses through its industry-leading advertising and marketing resources. Supported by executive sponsor Ahu Terzi, Meredith VP of Corporate Beauty; Marketing Director Christine Staley; Co-chair Isabelle Gomez; and a committed team of individuals from all levels of the organization, Alam was thrilled to see this program materialize. "The Good Impressions team members and I have been so inspired by these entrepreneurs. Their innovation, drive, commitment and hard work prove that you can make your dreams a reality while also doing something good for society. I'm so glad Meredith can be a part of that."

To learn more about the Good Impressions program, visit
https://goodimpressionsbymeredith.com/

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Meredith Corporation (NYSE: MDP), a leading media company for nearly 120 years, produces service journalism that engages audiences with essential, inspiring, and trusted content. Meredith reaches consumers where they are across multiple platforms including digital, video, magazine, and broadcast television. Meredith's National Media Group reaches nearly 95 percent of all U.S. women and more than 190 million unduplicated American consumers every month through such iconic brands as PEOPLE, Better Homes & Gardens, Allrecipes, Southern Living, and REAL SIMPLE. Meredith's premium digital network reaches more than 150 million consumers each month. The Company is the No. 1 U.S. magazine operator with 36 million subscribers and the No. 2 global licensor with robust brand licensing activities that include a Better Homes & Gardens partnership with Walmart. Meredith's Local Media Group portfolio includes 17 television stations reaching 11 percent of U.S. households and 30 million viewers. Meredith's portfolio is concentrated in large, fast-growing markets, with seven stations in the nation's Top 25 markets, including Atlanta, Phoenix, St. Louis, and Portland, and 13 stations in the Top 50.

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