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MEDIA CONTACTS:

Kelley DeVincentis
Scott Goldberg
Southard Communications
Kelley@Southardinc.com
Scott@southardinc.com
212/777-2220

**THAMES & KOSMOS CONTINUES TO INNOVATE SCIENCE AND STEM TOY
CATEGORY WITH GROUND-BREAKING KITS AND BOARD GAMES THAT
STIMULATE CURIOUS MINDS**

*-AWARD-WINNING COMPANY EXPANDS INTO BOARD GAME CATEGORY, LAUNCHES NEW LINE
FOR PRESCHOOLERS, AND DESIGNS NEW KITS THAT ARE “OUT OF THIS WORLD”-*

New York, NY (February 2015) –Thames & Kosmos continues to lead the charge in energizing young minds with a passion for STEM-related subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). The award-winning company – honored recipients of nearly a dozen industry awards in 2014, and two nominations for the prestigious Toy of the Year Award (T.O.T.Y) in 2015 – are set to release 26 new science kits including the **Kids First Series**, which introduces science to children as young as three, and a new collection of space-theme kits, which captures the spirit of the latest efforts from around the world to pursue space travel and exploration. In addition, the company will announce its expansion into the board game category starting with a carefully curated series of six, high-quality, German-style **Board Games** from the internationally renowned publishing powerhouse, Kosmos. The complete line of Thames & Kosmos products will be on display at American International Toy Fair in New York City February 14th – 17th **Booth #2077**.

For over a decade, Thames & Kosmos has worked to improve informal science education by publishing high-quality experiment kits. The company was formed at the turn of the millennia as an alliance between the Thames Science Center, a science museum and learning store, and the well-respected German company, Kosmos, which had a longstanding and distinguished reputation for publishing science kits with serious content and top-notch materials. At the time, “science” had yet to become a recognized category in the mainstream retail space, but there was a great and unmistakable need for products that stimulated curiosity, inspired analytical thinking, and embraced creative problem-solving.

As America’s students continue to struggle in some of the most important subjects within our education system, there has never been a more important or more relevant time for the company to carry out its mission and continue to spearhead activities that encourage and improve STEM aptitudes. According to the U.S. Department of Education, only 16% of American high school seniors are proficient in mathematics and interested in a STEM career.

“If we don't get our kids excited about STEM subjects at a young age, then our country will continue to fall behind,” says Ted McGuire, President and Co-Founder of Thames & Kosmos.

The new **Kids First** science kits will allow parents to introduce scientific topics and hands-on empirical learning to young children, starting at age 3, and gradually prepare them for more advanced science kits and schoolwork. Level One kits are specially designed for ages 3-5. The series is defined by storybook manuals, and building pieces and accessories that are big, chunky, durable, and colorful. Topics inspired by automobiles, aircrafts, amusement parks, and science labs inspire pretend play and introduce the

fundamentals of physics and engineering. Level Two (ages 5-7) and Level Three (ages 8+) introduce more advanced topics such as Physics, Biology, and Chemistry.

“Even before STEM was the buzzword that it is today, we were making our science kits with the belief that kids of all ages need to be engaged with challenging yet encouraging educational experiences,” McGuire added. “What you practice gets stronger — so by enabling kids to exercise their innate sense of curiosity, we help them cultivate this powerful emotion. Emotions are what drive our behavior and decisions. In a sense, curiosity is one of humanity’s greatest natural resources.”

In fact, Thames & Kosmos has always been ahead of the curve, so to speak. In the early 1900’s, Kosmos recognized an increasing public interest in science and technology and began developing field guides and experiments kits. One hundred years later, Jane Holdsworth [co-founder of Thames & Kosmos] envisioned the opportunity for improvement within the landscape of informal education and laid the foundation for what would become the current day manifestation of the company.

“We always try to be aware of and anticipate where the needs are,” said Andrew Quartin, CEO of Thames & Kosmos. “You could say it’s in our blood.”

So what else does Thames & Kosmos see today?

“There is a marked global interest in the resurgence of space travel,” said McGuire. “We’re excited to unveil a variety of new space themed kits this year, from remote-controlled engineering kits, to hydroponics, to a beautiful entry-level telescope kit.”

“Another major trend we are seeing is the profound increase in the addictive, largely passive consumption of media in kids’ everyday lives,” Quartin added. “U.S. children — and adults — are now spending between 5 and 11 hours per day in front of a screen. More time spent watching TV, surfing the internet and playing video games means less time for more useful and productive life-building activities.”

Increasingly, popular sentiment holds that too much screen time not only can exacerbate the underlying issues related to decreased proficiency in schools, but can also be linked to many physical and emotional challenges such as sleep disorders, attention problems, anxiety disorders, depression, and obesity — regardless of age.

In response to this, combined with the growing demand for European board games, Thames & Kosmos will, for the first time, carry **Kosmos Games**, a collection of high-quality board games from the internationally esteemed authors and designers such as Klaus Teuber (author of “The Settlers of Catan”), Reiner Knizia, Grzegorz Rejchtman, and Gunter Cornett. German engineered and beautifully made, these games become enduring family favorites and game night classics. For all these reasons, Kosmos games have earned worldwide acclaim.

“Kosmos has developed games that are the perfect complement to what we have been able to achieve with our science kits,” McGuire explains. “They’re fun and addicting, but also challenge the mind and encourage friendly competition in so many ways. They help build social skills, stimulate logical and strategic thinking, promote visual-spatial and math skills, cultivate physical coordination and manual dexterity, encourage family time, and inspire fair-mindedness, confidence, and honorable attitudes.”

The complete line of Thames & Kosmos science kits and Kosmos Board Games will be on display at the American International Toy Fair. For more information, consumers can log onto:

Website: www.ThamesandKosmos.com
Facebook: www.Facebook.com/ThamesandKosmos
Twitter: @ThamesandKosmos
YouTube: www.YouTube.com/ThamesandKosmos

Science Kits:

- **Space Farm (Geek & Co. Science Line)**
Explore what it would take to set up an extraterrestrial farm on another planet. Experiment with a nutrient gel to grow garden cress in hydroponic tubes without soil. In the greenhouse dome, grow the alien-like succulent Tiger's Jaw (*Faucaria tigrina*). Find out what plants need in order to grow and how those things might be provided on another world. Ages: 8+ | MSRP: \$19.95 Available: Spring 2015
- **Remote-Control Machines: Space Explorers (Signature Series)**
With this engineering kit, kids can build a remote-controlled model of a robotic rover resembling the ones used to explore Mars. The remote can control up to three motors, which move the rover back and forth, turn the wheels to steer the rover, and control the robotic arm to pick up extraterrestrial specimens like small rocks. Ages: 8+ | MSRP: \$99.95 Available: June 2015
- **TK1 Telescope & Astronomy Kit (Signature Series)**
This high-quality refractor telescope with coated glass optics and plenty of accessories allows for countless exciting space observations. Ages: 12+ | MSRP: \$169.95 Available: July 2015

Kosmos Games:

- **Dohdles!** are riddles made of dough! Exercise your imagination in this artistic and hilarious sculpting and guessing game for families and parties of three to six players. Ages: 8+ | MSRP: \$39.95 Available: May 2015
- **Ubongo** is a fast-paced, addictive, and easy-to-learn geometric puzzle game. Players race against the timer and against each other to solve a puzzle of interlocking shapes. The faster you solve the puzzle, the more gems you get. Ages: 8+ | MSRP: \$39.95 Available: May 2015
- **Dimension** is a fast-paced, innovative puzzle game that takes place in three dimensions with 60 colorful spheres. Ages: 8+ | MSRP: \$49.95 Available: April 2015
- **Lost Cities: The Board Game:** The research teams are outfitted and ready to embark on their adventures to find five forgotten cities. Who will lead the way to fantastic discoveries? Each player guides a team of explorers on up to five expeditions. To advance along an expedition path, a card in the path's color must be played for each step forward. For two to four players. Ages: 10+ | MSRP: \$39.95 Available: April 2015
- **Kahuna:** Who will rule the South Seas? Two Kahuna — ancient sorcerers of the Pacific — compete for dominance on an archipelago consisting of twelve small islands. Like the best two-player games, this classic card-based board game is deceptively simple and highly strategic. Ages: 10+ | MSRP: \$24.05 Available: April 2015
- **Lost Cities: The Original Card Game:** Who will discover the ancient civilizations? Two explorers embark on research journeys to remote corners of the world: the Himalayan Mountains, the Central American rainforest, the Egyptian desert, a mysterious volcano, and the bottom of the sea. As the cards are played, the expedition routes take shape and the explorers earn points. For two players. Ages: 10+ | MSRP: \$19.95 Available: April 2015

About Thames & Kosmos:

Thames & Kosmos (T&K) was founded in 2001 with the mission of improving informal science education by publishing high-quality science and technology related educational products for children of all ages. T&K places an emphasis on teaching concepts and skills through hands-on modeling of real-world devices and processes, and by offering comprehensive, meaningful reading materials for a rich learning experience. T&K is headquartered in Providence, RI and the North American Subsidiary of Franckh-Kosmos Verlags-GmbH & Co. KG.

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