



# Setting The Stage: by Pamela Graves Toy Fair 2008

It's time to get down to the business of play! The 105<sup>th</sup> edition of the American International Toy Fair®, the largest international toy trade show in the Western Hemisphere, gets underway February 17-20 at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York City and showroom locations in the Toy District.

## Play Dates

KidsGive will introduce Toy Fair attendees to its newest addition, Piper Whelan from Sydney, Australia, the company's newest addition to its Karito Kids World Collection. Piper and her pals from the Karito Kids World Collection will be in Booth #6436.

Piper is an 11 year-old who lives with her mother, father and little sister in Bondi Beach. She is an avid surfer and life guard, which they call Nippers down under. Being outdoors so much, Pip begins to see the effects that humans have on our environment. Known as a "Greenie" by her friends and family, Pip takes it upon herself to educate others about how they can make a difference until one day when she was cleaning trash along the beach and realized what she thought was a bag was no bag at all. Her book reveals the mystery of why the sea life was dying.

Karito Kids debuted in July 2007 with the World Collection of five ethnically accurate international dolls and books that empower kids to make a difference while having fun themselves. Every doll and book comes with a passport that invites the child

to log onto [www.karitokids.com](http://www.karitokids.com) and experience the joy of giving to other kids who are not as lucky as them. The brand provides an interactive experience combining traditional play with online gaming. But the best part is the fact that all of this fun allows the child to simultaneously help other kids by selecting one of four causes to support (food, home, school or health) since all products under the Karito Kids brand contribute 3 percent of the MSRP to Plan USA, a children's charity with whom the company has partnered.

The current global gals in the Karito Kids collection include Wan Ling from China, Gia from Italy, Lulu from Kenya, Zoë from America and Pita from Mexico. Each character has a unique personality and a hard-cover adventure mystery book that allows kids to recognize that for the most part no matter where you live in the world, all kids are the same. The stories are written by an award-winning author and illustrated by former Disney animators, which make these characters that much more realistic. Wan Ling is crazy about pandas and science, Gia is a total fashionista, Lulu is a kid's TV co-host and awesome soccer player, Pita is an award-winning equestrian and Zoë is a guitar playing, singing bohemian.

## TIA Announces TOTY Award Nominees

The Toy Industry Association has announced the nominees for the 8<sup>th</sup> annual TOTY Awards, reflecting products from a wide range of small, medium and large companies.

The Awards Ceremony will be held at Pier 60 at Chelsea Piers on Saturday, February 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. During the event, Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen, the third generation of the LEGO family and the principal shareholder of the LEGO Group, will be inducted into the Toy Hall of Fame.

The 2008 Final Nominees are:

• **Specialty Toy Of The Year:** Bananagrams, Bananagrams, LLC; Fashion Design Studio, Creativity for Kids/Faber-Castell; Karito Kids World Collection, KidsGive, LLC;