



**PBS KIDS ANNOUNCES *MOLLY OF DENALI*,
PREMIERING JULY 15, 2019**

***New Animated Adventure Comedy is First Nationally Distributed Kids' Series
to Feature Native American Lead***

Pasadena, CA, February 1, 2019 – From Alaska to homes all across the U.S., [MOLLY OF DENALI](#), a groundbreaking new [PBS KIDS](#) series produced by WGBH Boston, will premiere nationwide July 15, 2019 on PBS stations, the 24/7 PBS KIDS channel and PBS KIDS digital platforms.

The first nationally distributed children's series to feature a Native American lead character, **MOLLY OF DENALI** is about Alaska Native Molly Mabray, a feisty and resourceful 10-year-old Gwich'in/Koyukon/Dena'ina Athabascan girl, who takes viewers ages 4 to 8 along with her on adventures and fosters literacy skills along the way. With an emphasis on family and intergenerational relationships, episodes of **MOLLY OF DENALI** model Alaska Native values, such as respecting others, sharing what you have and honoring your elders, while showcasing contemporary aspects of rural life, including strong female role models and how technology aids in communication.

"PBS KIDS has a longstanding commitment to celebrating inclusiveness and diversity, and we're delighted to further that mission through **MOLLY OF DENALI**," said Linda Simensky, Vice President, Children's Programming, PBS. "We can't wait for families to meet **MOLLY OF DENALI**, who will introduce them to some of the richest cultures in our nation."

MOLLY OF DENALI is grounded in a pioneering curriculum focused on informational text, a foundational aspect of literacy education. Informational texts are designed to convey information and can include written words, images, graphics, video and oral language. In every episode, Molly navigates her world and solves problems with the help of books, online resources, field guides, historical documents, maps, tables, posters, photos, Indigenous knowledge from elders, her very own vlog and more.

"We're excited to bring the world of **MOLLY OF DENALI** to audiences everywhere," said WGBH Executive Producer Dorothea Gillim. "What began with the idea of creating a show based on the joy children find in 'playing store' has evolved into the story of kids and community, and an authentic reflection of life in Alaska, with an important Informational Text curriculum to support it."

MOLLY OF DENALI includes Alaska Native voices in all aspects of the production, both on camera and behind the scenes. Every Indigenous character is voiced by an Indigenous actor, including the lead character of Molly, who is voiced by Alaska Native Sovereign Bill (Tlingit and

Muckleshoot). Alaska Native screenwriters and producers are also part of bringing the series to life. WGBH Boston developed **MOLLY OF DENALI** with a working group of Alaska Native advisors, and is creating opportunities for developing Alaska Native talent via a [Scriptwriting Fellowship](#). The show also gives young viewers a window into the Alaskan experience through live-action interstitials featuring local children and regions filmed by Alaskan production teams, including Alaska Public Media, KUAC, UAF Frame and Channel Films. The theme song was sung by Phillip Blanchett and Karina Moeller of the Yupik Alaska Native band [Pamyua](#), and the Athabaskan fiddle and traditional drum in the song were played by Gwich'in fiddler Brennan Firth.

"I'm thrilled that Alaska Native children will get to see themselves and our vibrant cultures represented in **MOLLY OF DENALI**," said Princess Daazhrai Johnson, Creative Producer of the series. "Equally important is having a positive representation of Alaska Native culture shared with a broader audience. The show also reinforces for children that no matter where they're from or where they live, we are all much more alike than we are different."

MOLLY OF DENALI is being developed as part of the [Corporation for Public Broadcasting](#) (CPB) and PBS Ready To Learn Initiative with funding from the U.S. Department of Education. The Ready To Learn Initiative brings educational television and digital media resources to children ages 2-8, and aims to promote early science and literacy learning, with an emphasis on supporting children from underserved communities.

"As a signature component for the CPB-PBS Ready To Learn Initiative, **MOLLY OF DENALI** presents high-quality, innovative educational content promoting literacy skills while exposing young learners to cultural diversity in a positive and authentic way," said Deb Sanchez, CPB Senior Vice President, Education and Children's Content. "CPB supports both education and diversity through its investments in the **MOLLY OF DENALI** production, ensuring that Alaska Natives are involved in all aspects and all levels of production and the creation of multi-station educational resources focused on rural children."

Each episode of **MOLLY OF DENALI** will include two 11-minute stories as well as a live-action interstitial. The first season will feature 38 half-hour episodes, along with a one-hour special.

Starting in May 2019, kids and families can share in the early adventures of Molly and her friends through a new eight-part podcast series, a prequel to the PBS KIDS show debuting in July. Drawing on Native storytelling to introduce Molly and her home, [The Molly of Denali podcast](#) is a first from WGBH, in partnership with PRX and Gen-Z Media.

The series is co-produced by WGBH and its animation partner, Atomic Cartoons, in association with CBC Kids. **MOLLY OF DENALI** is developed and produced with funding from CPB, the Department of Education's Ready To Learn Grant, public television viewers and the Province of British Columbia Production Services Tax Credit. Corporate funding provided by Homer.

Alaska Native working group: Adeline P. Raboff, Dewey Kk'oleyo Hoffman, Luke Titus and Rochelle Adams. Language Advisors: Adeline P. Raboff, Lance X'unei Twitchell, Lorraine David, Marie Meade and Marjorie Tahbone. Informational text advisor: Nell K. Duke, University of Michigan.

About PBS KIDS

PBS KIDS, the number one educational media brand for kids, offers children ages 2-8 the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television, digital media and community-based programs. PBS KIDS and local stations across the country support the entire ecosystem in which children learn, including their teachers, parents and community. Provided by stations, the free PBS KIDS 24/7 channel and live stream is available to more than 95% of U.S. TV households. Kidscreen- and Webby Award-winning pbskids.org provides engaging interactive content, including digital games and streaming video. PBS KIDS offers mobile apps to help support young children's learning, including the PBS KIDS Video app, which is available on a variety of mobile devices and on platforms such as Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV and Chromecast. PBS KIDS also offers parent and teacher resources to support children's learning anytime and anywhere. For more information on PBS KIDS content and initiatives supporting school readiness and more, visit pbs.org/pressroom, or follow PBS KIDS on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and Instagram.

About WGBH

WGBH Boston is America's preeminent public broadcaster and the largest producer of PBS content for TV and the Web, including *Frontline*, *American Experience*, *NOVA*, *Masterpiece*, *Antiques Roadshow*, *Arthur*, *Pinkalicious* & *Peterrific* and more than a dozen other prime-time and lifestyle series. WGBH is a partner in the digital channels WORLD and Create, and also is a major supplier of programming for public radio. As a leader in educational multimedia for the classroom WGBH supplies content to PBS LearningMedia, a national broadband service for teachers and students. WGBH also is a pioneer in technologies and services that make media accessible to those with hearing or visual impairments. WGBH has been recognized with hundreds of honors, including Emmys, Peabodys, duPont-Columbia Awards and Oscars. More info at www.wgbh.org.

About the Corporation for Public Broadcasting

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government's investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of nearly 1,500 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single source of funding for research, technology and program development for public radio, television and related online services. For more information, visit www.cpb.org and follow us on Twitter [@CPBmedia](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#), and [subscribe](#) for email updates.

About The Ready To Learn Initiative

The Ready To Learn Initiative is a cooperative agreement funded and managed by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement. It supports the development of innovative educational television and digital media targeted to preschool and early elementary school children and their families. Its general goal is to promote early learning and school readiness, with a particular interest in reaching low-income children. In addition to creating television and other media products, the program supports activities intended to promote national distribution of the programming, effective educational uses of the programming, community-based outreach and research on educational effectiveness.

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