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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## THE CHANGING FUNNY FACE OF FAMILY

**Seattle, WA, August 2009** – With half a million children in foster care, 200,000 a year being adopted, over one million interracial families, many two-mommy and two-daddy households, and one in three Americans reported as being stepparents, stepchildren, or stepsiblings, nontraditional families have now become the majority in the US. Books that are reflective and supportive of this diverse mix of families are few and far between in the world of “kid lit.” Parents are asking, “Where are the books that have a family mix like ours? What should our children read?” They want books that show how families can and do grow these days, with smart, engaging stories that give their children a sense of their rightful place in society.

Former diversity trainer and educator, Amanda Lorenzo, has created a series of illustrated chapter books for children that fit the bill. As a gifted storyteller and a firm believer in the inherent strength that our diversity affords us, Ms. Lorenzo is a natural to offer stories that show a unique family in action. Her *Runt Farm* books feature a “found family”, a multi-species band of characters that come together on an abandoned farm. They fend off weasels and other villains, experience a variety of scrapes and escapes and most importantly face their own foibles with good humor.

Family configurations are changing, but family itself is universal. The typical North American family may no longer be a Mom, a Dad and 2.5 children, but we’re sassy, smart and serious about our wonderful, motley and deserving families. The world over, we want the best for them -- and that includes the best books.

“All of us probably have an “inner runt”, something that sets us apart, but searching for our counterparts, and creating and our own families is one of the best and most engaging things we as humans ever do.” – Amanda Lorenzo

The *Runt Farm* children’s book series debuts with ***Under New Management***, followed by ***Beatrice and Blossom***, in August 2009. Later this year ***Clovis Escapes!*** Book 1 in the series will round out the makeshift family, introducing a rather shy and retiring mouse who has the heart of a great artist.

Endorsed by Ann Medlock, founder of the Giraffe Project, Lewis Buzbee, author of *Steinbeck’s Ghost*, Dee Tadlock, founder of ReadRight Systems®, and Yvonne Palka, author of *Dragon Fire*, *Ocean Mist*, and many others, the *Runt Farm* family aims to charm the socks off children and parents alike with outrageous vocabulary (even adults will appreciate the glossary), strange inventions from a mouse’s workshop, and mesmerizing illustrations.

***Runt Farm*** author **Amanda Lorenzo** is a former diversity trainer with a background in music education and computer technology. She and book editor Ceci Miller created the *Runt Farm* series to offer fun, diversity-friendly children’s stories that encourage literacy and learning. Ms. Lorenzo lives in Seattle, Washington.

Award-winning illustrator **Mark Evan Walker** has done extensive editorial illustration, fine art and scenic design. Mr. Walker studied at The Art Institute of Dallas and holds a Certificate of Arts from the Leys School at Cambridge University. He lives in Fort Worth, Texas.

The *Runt Farm* books are now available at [RuntFarm.com](http://RuntFarm.com), Amazon, or your favorite bookstore. In September kids, parents and teachers can go to ***RuntFarm.com*** for free fun downloads and resources. On The Barn Wall kids can put up stories, drawings and notes to author Amanda Lorenzo.