



CLEARWATER MARINE  
AQUARIUM™  
**MEDIA ALERT**

## **Winter the Dolphin Honors Hero Who Rescued Abused Child** *Officer Inspires Anti-Child Abuse Campaign at Home of Dolphin Tale Movies*

**Clearwater, FL (August 10, 2017)** – [Clearwater Marine Aquarium](#) (CMA), home of Winter the Dolphin and the hit *Dolphin Tale* movies, honored a national hero for his actions against child abuse. CMA along with local law enforcement and first responders honored Officer Jody Thompson of Oklahoma’s Poteau Police Department and his family for saving a young boy from severe abuse.

Officer Thompson performed a heroic act when he rescued an eight-year-old boy named John from an abusive home. Officer Thompson stayed with John all night at the hospital after rescuing him from the horrific scene, and he and his wife adopted him into their family. Months later, John’s biological mother had a baby girl in prison and the Thompson family adopted her so she could be raised with her biological brother. Now a family of seven, the Thompsons traveled to Clearwater, Fla., to be honored and meet Winter the Dolphin. Winter was also rescued when she was young, after being entangled in a crab trap and losing her tail.

On Thursday, Aug. 10 numerous local police officers, first responders and their vehicles lined the street in front of CMA to greet the family upon their arrival via police escort. A press event was held in their honor, including an announcement of CMA’s anti-child abuse campaign, [Winter’s Rescue Mission](#), to raise awareness on the issue and promote resources for those affected by child abuse.

The Thompson family met Winter and Hope, two rescued dolphins at Clearwater Marine Aquarium, following the press conference.

*“Clearwater Marine Aquarium is making a stand against child abuse,”* says David Yates, CEO. *“We are so thankful for heroes like Officer Jody Thompson who not only saved these children from horror, but adopted them as his own. This aligns seamlessly with the aquarium’s mission of rescue and inspiration.”*

[Download video from the event here.](#)

*Media inquiries: Contact Julia Anderson: [Janderson@cmaaquarium.org](mailto:Janderson@cmaaquarium.org) or 727.686.3499.*

### **About Clearwater Marine Aquarium:**

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working marine rescue center dedicated to inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation and release. CMA is home to rescued dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays, nurse sharks and more. Winter the dolphin’s story of survival, after an injury that caused her to lose her tail, has impacted millions of people around the world. A major motion picture, *Dolphin Tale*, highlighted her life story in 2011. The sequel, *Dolphin Tale 2*, was released in September 2014 and features the incredible story of Hope, a young resident dolphin of CMA. The mission and potential to change people’s lives differentiates Clearwater Marine Aquarium from any other aquarium in the world.