



CLEARWATER MARINE  
AQUARIUM™

## MEDIA ALERT

### Winter and Hope Surprise Young Amputee for Her Birthday

*Clearwater Marine Aquarium Hosts Special Family During Winter and Hope's Birthday Week*

**Clearwater, FL (Oct. 9, 2017)** – This weekend Winter and Hope the dolphins surprised a special child for her birthday at Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA). Leya Allen turns nine years old this week, sharing a birthday week with the rescued dolphins Winter and Hope, who reside at CMA. She is also an amputee, sharing a connection with Winter the Dolphin who doesn't have a tail. Leya was surprised with a weekend stay in a Winter and Hope themed room at the Wyndham Grand in Clearwater Beach and a special encounter with the dolphins who have inspired her through hard times.

Leya's leg was amputated when she was a one-year-old due to a congenital birth defect of the left leg called PFFD (Proximal femoral focal deficiency). At birth her thigh bone was too short and had no fibula. Soon after her first surgery, she received her first leg and had to relearn to walk. Since then she has had another surgery and 8 prosthetic legs. Winter inspires her to overcome her daily challenges.

*"Winter and the other rescued animals at Clearwater Marine Aquarium inspire people all over the world with their stories,"* said David Yates, CEO of Clearwater Marine Aquarium. *"Leya and her family also inspire others, like Winter and Hope, with their perseverance and positivity."*

Winter and Hope will be celebrating their birthdays all week long at CMA during 'Winter and Hope's Birthday Bubble Bash.' Kids 12 and under who bring a birthday card for Winter or Hope receive \$9.99 admission October 7-16.

#### **Additional Details:**

- Video and photos available for download. [Click here to download.](#)
- [Click here](#) to learn more about Winter and Hope's Birthday Bubble Bash.

For further information, contact Julia Anderson at [janderson@cmaquarium.org](mailto:janderson@cmaquarium.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.

**WE BELIEVE** in preserving our environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of marine life, environmental education, research and conservation.

249 Windward Passage | Clearwater, FL 33767 | 727.441.1790 | [SeeWinter.com](http://SeeWinter.com)

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