



MEDIA ALERT

Local Elementary Schools Compete in Trash to Toys Competition for Earth Day

Clearwater Marine Aquarium promotes conservation in annual competition

Clearwater, FL (April. 22, 2017) – Today is Earth Day, April 22, and Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is celebrating by announcing the winners of its annual Trash to Toys competition. 35 competing classrooms at Hillsborough and Pinellas County elementary schools designed environmental enrichment devices for the rescued dolphins at CMA using only recyclable and reused items from the classroom or the students' homes. Winter and Hope, the rescued dolphins at CMA, helped choose the finalists by each selecting their favorite toy, and rescued dolphin Nicholas chose the winner.

“This competition is an important way for young students to learn about conservation in a fun and hands on way,” says Kristen Ingvertsen, Supervisor of Education Programs at Clearwater Marine Aquarium. “The goal of this contest, while definitely having fun, is to boost awareness of the importance of recycling, and reducing plastics that could end up in our oceans.”

Nicholas the rescued dolphin chose the toy from Jamerson Elementary school as this year's winner. Honorable mentions went to McMullen-Booth Elementary, Mitchell Elementary, Fishhawk Creek Elementary, and Lowry Elementary. The winning classroom at Jamerson Elementary will also receive an in-class presentation from a Clearwater Marine Aquarium team member.

Additional media information:

- To download footage from the competition, [click here](#).
- For further information, contact Julia Anderson at 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.

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