



CLEARWATER MARINE  
AQUARIUM™

## MEDIA ADVISORY

**Clearwater Marine Aquarium welcomes Hassan and Hussein Benhaffaf, conjoined twins from Ireland who have miraculously survived surgery to separate.**

Clearwater, FL (April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014) – Hassan and Hussein Benhaffaf were born conjoined from the chest to pelvis and at four months old, underwent life-saving surgery to separate them. The boys have defied odds since inception – as only a very small number of conjoined twins make it to birth, and of those, most don't make it past the first 24 hours. The twins, now four-years-old are nicknamed “Little Fighters.”

The boys were born in London at 34 weeks as they couldn't carry out the birth in Ireland. They shared a liver, stomach, bladder, chest, pelvis, and pericardium sac. They were later separated at London's Ormond Street Hospital during a 14-hour surgery. While the surgery was a success, it left the boys with just one leg and one kidney each. Faced with numerous challenges including Hassan's diagnosis of scoliosis which will require surgery every six months until he's 18 and daily medical appointments, the twins receive full time care from their parents.

Thanks to generous donors and charitable organizations, including Give Kids the World, this incredible family, is soon to embark on the trip of a lifetime to Florida where they will meet Winter, the amputee dolphin from Hassan and Hussein's favorite movie, *Dolphin Tale*, and receive prosthetic care from the same clinical team who fits Winter.

**The Benhaffaf Family will visit CMA Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM.**

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

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Clearwater Marine Aquarium's mission is to preserve marine life and the environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation and release.

CMA is home to dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays, nurse sharks and more. Winter the dolphin's story of survival and inspiration has touched millions of people around the world. A movie, *Dolphin Tale*, about her life story was a #1 box office hit in theaters, and is now available in DVD. Produced by Warner Bros.-based Alcon Entertainment, *Dolphin Tale* stars Morgan Freeman, Harry Connick, Jr., and Ashley Judd. A sequel, *Dolphin Tale 2* is currently in production and scheduled for a

September 19, 2014 North American release. Her documentary, *Winter, the Dolphin That Can*, is available at [www.SeeWinter.com](http://www.SeeWinter.com). The documentary takes viewers on an extraordinary journey through her rescue, fight to stay alive and extensive rehabilitation. Scholastic published *Winter's Tail: How One Little Dolphin Learned to Swim Again* in October 2009.