

CONNECT WITH “***OUR OCEAN PLANET***” AT THE
NATIONAL AQUARIUM

All New Dolphin Show brings visitors into the dolphins’ world beginning April 4th

Baltimore (March 18, 2009) – Baltimore’s Inner Harbor is connected, without anything separating it, to ALL of the oceans on earth. *Our Ocean Planet: the New Dolphin Show* at the National Aquarium uses the dolphin’s world to teach visitors the important connection between human life and life in the oceans. Beginning April 4th, visitors to this interactive show will engage in the Atlantic bottlenose dolphins’ watery world that is vastly different from ours, yet connected and dependent on us to keep it healthy, making it truly, ***Our Ocean Planet***.

Two years in the making, the new show introduces elements that explore the dolphins’ intelligence, agility and power through new dynamic behaviors such as underwater flips, speed behaviors, and underwater bubbles, and favorites such as the fluke fling, high jump and vertical spins. Throughout the show visitors discover how these magnificent creatures have adapted to life underwater while also learning about the shared abilities of dolphins and humans.

The new show also features new lighting elements that create a fun, engaging atmosphere and vibrant video components that help tell the story of “*Our Ocean Planet*.” The pre-show features a variety of new elements to engage visitors as they enter the amphitheater such as a video segment with World Figuring Skating Champion and Maryland native, Kimmie Meissner, a text-to-win component and a photo-montage of images submitted by visitors to the National Aquarium flickr group.

Our Ocean Planet is the sixth dolphin show to be introduced at the National Aquarium. The show concepts have ranged from dolphin adaptations, to myths about dolphins, to exploring how dolphins play. This new show is the first to have a strong global message that speaks to keeping our blue planet, and all of its creatures healthy.

“As with every dolphin show, *Our Ocean Planet* grew from a basic concept,” commented Nancy Hotchkiss, Senior Director of Visitor Experiences at the National Aquarium. “For nearly 20 years the dolphins have been our most popular exhibit and we have watched the special connections that people make with these magnificent animals. We felt it was time to expand upon that special connection, to help people understand how our behaviors on land affect the oceans, and teach what it means to share this big, blue planet.”

The show was produced by George Kalwa, a local producer with 25 years experience in broadcast and video communication design. To help bring the show’s concept alive, Kalwa and the Aquarium’s dolphin show team called upon community members who share in the Aquarium’s mission. World Figuring Skating Champion **Kimmie Meissner** and world renowned dolphin scientist, **Dr. Diana Reiss**, provided important video elements to the show.

“Growing up in Maryland, the National Aquarium was one of my favorite places to visit,” commented world figure skating champion, Kimmie Meissner. “I find dolphins to be one of the most fascinating creatures on this planet and I truly believe that we have a responsibility to help keep their world healthy and clean. I’m happy to support the Aquarium and assist in their efforts to spread this message to young people across the globe.”

In December 1990, the Aquarium opened the Marine Mammal Pavilion on the pier adjacent to the main building. Today, the Lyn P. Meyerhoff Auditorium is home to ten beloved Atlantic bottlenose dolphins that are a favorite among visitors. The 1300-seat amphitheater showcases the majesty of dolphins through daily shows that combines family entertainment with participatory education.

Our Ocean Planet is running multiple times daily at the National Aquarium and included in the Aquarium’s total experience ticket package. Show times and advance ticket sales can be found by visiting the interactive trip planner on aqua.org. Visitors can learn more about the Aquarium’s Atlantic bottlenose dolphins by visiting aqua.org/dolphins.

The National Aquarium, a nonprofit organization, is Maryland’s most exciting and popular cultural attraction, as well as one of the region’s leading conservation and education resources, hosting more than 1.4 million visitors per year. Through transforming experiences, the National Aquarium inspires people to enjoy, respect and protect the aquatic world. It is dedicated to education and conservation through more than a dozen programs that serve the environment and the community.

www.aqua.org/dolphins