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## Beluga Calf Born at SeaWorld San Antonio

**SAN ANTONIO** (August 11, 2016) — Early this morning, SeaWorld San Antonio welcomed the newest addition to its beluga whale family.

The calf, whose sex is yet to be determined, made its head first entrance after about 30 minutes of labor. The Zoological team – who have been on 24-hour watch since July 1 in anticipation of the birth – was on hand as the mother “Luna” delivered the calf weighing approximately 140 lbs. “Luna” was born at SeaWorld San Antonio in 2000, this is her third calf. Another experienced mother, “Martha” joined “Luna” and calf in the pool. The calf’s sire, “Imaq,” comes from the Vancouver Aquarium and is currently in the care of SeaWorld San Antonio.

“SeaWorld is deeply committed to the health and care of all our animals, and we are happy to report that the new calf has been observed bonding and swimming with mom as expected,” said Chris Bellows, SeaWorld San Antonio’s vice president for zoological operations. “We expect the calf to begin nursing soon, which is one of the first signs of health and well-being in a newborn.”

The first weeks in the life of a dolphin or whale are critical. Over the next couple months, Zoological staff will monitor the calf 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and animal trainers and veterinarians are ready to assist if the need arises.

“We will be monitoring nursing, respirations and other vital indicators which, thus far, have been positive,” Bellows said. “Round-the-clock monitoring enables us to record data that will better help us understand beluga calf growth and development.”

Today’s birth is important for not just SeaWorld, but also for researchers and accredited zoological facilities committed to caring for beluga whales and educating the public to better understand and conserve this protected species. The Arctic sea ice that makes up the beluga’s habitat and is a critical component of Arctic marine ecosystem is disappearing at an alarming rate. The changing environment and increasing human pressures from shipping noise and pollution mean fewer food sources and greater threats affecting belugas and other marine animals.

In order to allow mother and calf time to bond, presentations in Beluga Stadium will be temporarily suspended. The park plans to hold limited “visiting hours” within the next few days for guests to have the opportunity to come see our newest addition.

For SeaWorld San Antonio general information, visit [seaworldsanantonio.com](http://seaworldsanantonio.com).

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The company owns or licenses a portfolio of recognized brands including SeaWorld, Busch Gardens® and Sea Rescue®. Over its more than 50-year history, the company has built a diversified portfolio of 12 destination and regional theme parks that are grouped in key markets across the United States, many of which showcase its one-of-a-kind zoological collection of over 800 species of animals. The company's theme parks feature a diverse array of rides, shows and other attractions with broad demographic appeal which deliver memorable experiences and a strong value proposition for its guests.

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