



Media Contact: sanantonio@seaworld.com

### For Immediate Release

# <u>SeaWorld's® New Waterpark, Aquatica™, Opens This Weekend, Bringing</u> <u>the Beach to San Antonio and Offering Up-Close Animal Experiences.</u>

San Antonio, TX (May 18, 2012) – Tomorrow, SeaWorld® will introduce its guests to Aquatica Waterpark™, a whimsical aquatic park with up-close animal experiences, high-speed thrills and relaxing, sandy beaches. Aquatica™ is the single largest capital project in park's history.

What makes Aquatica<sup>TM</sup> different from other waterparks are the immersive animal experiences it offers. The waterpark features live animals from lands all over the world. Southern stingrays, brilliant macaws and colorful fish bring to life the park's playful, high-energy nature.

"What sets Aquatica<sup>TM</sup> apart from other waterparks is that we offer our guests powerful connections with marine animals and one-of-a-kind waterslides in a lush, tropical setting. This is an experience you can't find anywhere else." said Dan Decker, Park President for SeaWorld® and Aquatica<sup>TM</sup>.

The park's signature ride, "Stingray Falls®," takes four-seat rafts down twists and turns to an underwater grotto, where guests come face-to-fin with stingrays and tropical fish. It's the only ride of its kind in the world. Guests at Aquatica™ will have the opportunity to experience stingrays in multiple ways. The most immersive program will be the "Stingray Encounter," where guests can make reservations to feed and wade with stingrays inside the attraction. Guests can also feed and view the stingrays from a wall at the edge of the pool.

Aquatica's<sup>TM</sup> stingray attraction, otherwise known as "Ke-Re Reef," features 120,000 gallons of saltwater and will include cownose and Southern stingrays. With stingrays, tropical fish and birds, Aquatica<sup>TM</sup> will be home to more than 500 animals.

# Experiences from Serene to Extreme

Guest can soak up the sun at any of Aquatica's<sup>™</sup> three beaches. The park features 42,000 square feet of white, sandy beaches, all of which are lined with reclining lounge chairs.

Three terraced pools, which feature naturalistic rockwork, are the perfect spots for guests to relax. Guests can unwind with shallow water swimming, in-water seating and cool waterfalls.

For thrill seekers, Aquatica<sup>TM</sup> features 10 slides that are sure to speed up your pulse. "Walhalla Wave®" offers the biggest thrill at Aquatica<sup>TM</sup>. A first of its kind in the Western Hemisphere, Walhalla Wave® takes a clover tube with up to four riders on a 720-degree loop into a 50-degree drop before sailing up a 3-story zero gravity wall – giving riders a moment of weightlessness.

Aquatica<sup>TM</sup> features some of the coolest kids' play places around. "Walkabout Waters<sup>TM</sup>" is a 3-story, interactive, outdoor funhouse that provides countless ways to get wet and stay cool. Navigating geysers, sprays, giant dumping buckets and spouts provides plenty of play for both the young and the young-at-heart.

## New Waterpark Is SeaWorld® San Antonio's Single Largest Capital Investment

The new park is an extension of the Aquatica Waterpark™ in Orlando, Florida, and it represents the single largest capital investment in the history of the San Antonio park.

Both SeaWorld® and Aquatica™ San Antonio are operated by the Orlando-based SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, which is a portfolio company of The Blackstone Group (NYSE:BX)

"We are proud to support SeaWorld's® continued expansion," said Peter Wallace, Senior Managing Director at Blackstone. "The opening of the new Aquatica™ waterpark in San Antonio exemplifies the kind of positive impact private capital can and should have in building American businesses and creating new jobs. We look forward to

continuing to work with SeaWorld's® exceptional management team as it grows the business."

### About SeaWorld®

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment inspires millions, through the power of entertainment, to celebrate, connect with and care for the natural world. The Company has been creating innovative entertainment experiences that blend imagination with nature for more than 50 years and is best known for its 11 U.S. theme parks, attractions that hosted more than 24 million guests in 2012 and include the beloved SeaWorld®, Busch Gardens® and Sesame Place® brands. The parks offer guests a variety of up-close experiences, from animal encounters that invite exploration and appreciation of the natural world, to thrilling rides and spectacular shows. In 2011 SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment began expanding its popular brands into media and entertainment platforms to connect people to nature and animals through movies, television, and digital media; plus began developing new lines of licensed consumer products.

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment is one of the world's foremost zoological organizations and a global leader in animal welfare, training, husbandry and veterinary care. The Company maintains one of the largest animal collections in the world and has helped lead advances in the care of species in zoological facilities and in the conservation of wild populations. SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment also operates one of the world's most respected programs to rescue, rehabilitate and return to the ocean marine animals that are ill, injured and orphaned. The SeaWorld® rescue team has helped more than 22,000 animals in need over the last four decades.

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment employs more than 21,000 people nationwide.

#### About Blackstone

Blackstone is one of the world's leading investment and advisory firms. We seek to create positive economic impact and long-term value for our investors, the companies we invest in, the companies we advise and the broader global economy. We do this through the commitment of our extraordinary people and flexible capital. Our alternative asset management businesses include the management of private equity funds, real estate funds, hedge fund solutions, credit-oriented funds and closed-end mutual funds. The Blackstone Group also provides various financial advisory services, including financial and strategic advisory, restructuring and reorganization advisory and fund placement services. Further information is available at www.blackstone.com. Follow us on twitter @blackstone.