

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Dr. Burak Ozgur and the Make-A-Wish® Orange County and the Inland Empire team with Spinal Elements and their Hero Program to celebrate local wish kid Olivia

Dr. Burak Ozgur is the first Orange County surgeon to partner with Spinal Elements' Hero® Program, doing so in a creative pandemic-safe ceremony



From left to right: Marc Yap (Spinal Elements), Dr. Burak Ozgur, Wish Kid Olivia and her mother Erika (TV Screen), Angela Wise and Melissa Gallagher (Make-A-Wish Orange County and the Inland Empire)

Carlsbad, CA – December 21, 2020 – Olivia, a bright 10-year-old Huntington Beach-area Make-A-Wish kid was able to receive her wish of a lifetime earlier this year – a trip to Disney’s Aulani Resort in Hawaii with her family – all because of a generous partnership between Newport Beach neurosurgeon Dr. Burak Ozgur, Make-A-Wish Orange County and the Inland Empire and Spinal Elements, Inc., a Carlsbad-based spine technology company. Olivia and Dr. Ozgur were both honored Friday, December 4th in a special ceremony at Dr. Ozgur’s One Brain and Spine clinic offices in Irvine, CA. Because of Covid-19 safety precautions, Olivia and her family members joined the event virtually via a Zoom call where she met Dr. Ozgur and shared more about her journey. Dr. Burak Ozgur is an award-winning, published, Newport Beach neurosurgeon who specializes in minimally invasive spine surgery. His partnership with Spinal Elements and their Hero Program is what enabled Olivia’s wish to come true.

Olivia is battling Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL). She was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) in 2017, which started 28 months of treatment. She loves the beach, swimming, everything Disney, and had long anticipated spending time with her family doing all three at the Aulani resort where they created amazing memories. While there, she met her favorite Disney characters including Minnie Mouse, Pluto and Stitch, all while soaking up the sun and enjoying Micky Mouse-shaped snow cones. During her trip, Olivia even made a new lifelong friendship with another wish kid, Arlie from Tennessee, who was there with a similar wish.

When asked who her favorite Disney character is, the 10-year-old had to think about it. Laughing, she confessed, "I like all of them. That's a hard question for me". Her mom Erika shared another perspective, saying, "Honestly, [the wish grant] was an opportunity to do the things we hadn't been able to do for so long – get away and spend time together. Being able to see her be free from all of those constraints that were put upon her – and as a result, the entire family – it was just completely healing".

Dr. Ozgur, the chief of neurosurgery and spinal surgery at Hoag Hospital in Newport Beach and Irvine also shared how meaningful the Hero Program has been for him saying, "As part of performing spine surgeries, often times we need allograft material, which is really a gift of life. So, when Spinal Elements presented the idea of the Hero allograft program, it was really an easy choice". He continued, "It's really great to be offered an opportunity where the proceeds go to different charities like the Make-A-Wish Foundation, it's a great opportunity to give back."

Make-A-Wish Orange County and the Inland Empire has granted more than 7,300 wishes to date and received a \$10,000 donation earlier this year to adopt Olivia's wish through Dr. Ozgur's partnership with Spinal Elements and its Hero program.

Spinal Elements launched its national Hero Program in 2012. Spinal Elements has chosen to honor tissue donation as a gift of life by paying that gift forward and donating proceeds from the sale of its Hero Allograft portfolio of products to charities benefiting children with serious medical conditions. Learn more about how the Hero Program has collaborated with surgeons and hospitals across the country by visiting www.heroallograft.com.

Spinal Elements is a technology-driven company headquartered in Carlsbad, California. A leading designer, developer, manufacturer and marketer of innovative medical devices used in spinal surgical procedures, Spinal Elements combines leading medical device technologies, biologics and instrumentation to create positive surgical outcomes that exceed surgeon and patient expectations. Spinal Elements has built a reputation delivering innovative and differentiated technologies that enable fundamental shifts in solutions for spine surgery. The company markets a complete portfolio of advanced spinal implant technologies. For more information, please visit www.spinalelements.com.

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