



Press Release  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Teen's Wish to be an Italian Chef Granted by Chefs at MAC 24/7 at Hilton Waikiki**

**June 24, 2016 - (Honolulu, Hawaii)** – Wish kid Adrian has battled leukemia for years, and uses his culinary skills to take his heart and soul to a land far, far away from the daily struggle of childhood illness. On Wednesday, June 22, his taste buds were in Italy as he created fettuccine with award-winning Chef James Aptakin, executive chef of M.A.C. 24/7 at the Hilton Waikiki Beach on Kuhio, and sous chef Edmund Kwok.

California natives, wish teen Adrian and his family had planned to be in Sicily this week—for an Italian culinary experience that had been in the works for over a year—until a European airline strike left them grounded. Within the hour, Adrian's wish coordinator contacted the Make-A-Wish Hawaii chapter and rerouted Adrian and his family to Hawaii, where the local chapter went to work, creating a gastronomical experience that would give wish teen Adrian the magical experience his heart so desired.

When Chef James Aptakin heard of wish teen Adrian's change of plans, he set the stage—and the table—for an authentic Italian culinary experience, complete with an eclectic menu of Italian salad, handmade fettuccine, various flavorful sauces and a spaghetti gelato for dessert, provided by IL Gelato.

"At the end of this experience," said Chef James, "all Adrian is going to know about Hawaii is 'Aloha,' how to shaka, and the magic of Hawaii's hospitality. Everything else from beginning to end is going to be authentic Italy."

Friends of Chef James donated gifts to surprise wish-teen-turned-chef Adrian including a hand-embroidered chef jacket by Malihini Hawaii uniforms, a handmade Koa wood cutting board from Foundwood, a recipe book with all the recipes learned during the cooking experience, and a framed, signed certificate of achievement for graduating a master chef class in Italian pasta-making.

The cooking class astounded with the sights and smells of exquisite Italian cuisine, matched only by the tastes of the food as the family sat down at a private banquet table, and the sounds of Italy, played by island musician Kiana Luna on her acoustic guitar. Wish teen Adrian, his mother, brother and grandmother were astonished by the little Italy experience in the middle of the island paradise.

"Every day since Adrian's trip was changed, we've experienced good omens that everything is as it should be—that we were meant to be here for this experience," said Jannette, Adrian's mother. "We were not expecting this at all. It's so amazing! I just can't believe it."

Adrian is one of over 600 wish children this summer who are looking for the hope and joy of a wish come true in Hawaii. Support the Make-A-Wish Hawaii summer campaign to *Give Wishes Wings* by visiting [hawaii.wish.org](http://hawaii.wish.org) and make a donation today.

**About Make-A-Wish® Hawaii:** Since 1982, Make-A-Wish® Hawaii has granted life-changing wishes to over 13,000 wish kids and their families. The Hawaii chapter is among the busiest in the nation as it not only grants wishes to keiki on all islands, it also coordinates the wishes of children from around the world who wish to see Hawaii.

The Make-A-Wish Hawaii chapter aims to grant the wish of each and every Hawaii child with a life-threatening medical condition, and each year the power of a wish extends beyond the children served, into communities at large. With more than 700 volunteers and more than 200 business partners statewide, wishes bring people together and spread hope, strength and joy to all involved.

To learn more about Make-A-Wish Hawaii, visit [www.hawaii.wish.org](http://www.hawaii.wish.org) or call 808-537-3118.

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### **About M.A.C. 24/7**

M.A.C. 24/7 is a bar and restaurant open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Executive Chef James Aptakin, winner of the Food Network Challenge's "Big Bash Caterers" competition, leads the restaurant. M.A.C. 24/7 is a recipient of numerous honors including 2015 "Best Gourmet Comfort Food" Hale 'Aina Awards by the readers of Honolulu Magazine and two "Taste Awards" by the Hawaii Food Manufacturer's Association for Best Taste and Best Presentation. M.A.C. 24/7 offers local and traditional American "gourmet comfort" food and is featured on the Travel Channel's hit show "Man v. Food" for its delicious, giant pancakes. It is located inside the Hilton Waikiki Beach hotel at 2500 Kuhio Avenue. Valet parking is only \$3.00 when dining at M.A.C. 24/7. For more information, call (808) 921-5564 or visit [www.mac247waikiki.com](http://www.mac247waikiki.com).

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