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Samantha Visits Santa Early!

Rochester- MI-December 12, 2007- Gaylord native Samantha Leete and her family started celebrating Christmas early with a magical trip to Disney World to meet Regis and Kelly at the taping of the Walt Disney World Christmas Day Parade. Sammy, just 10 years old, certainly earned her trip. Born with Spina Bifida, Sammy has undergone many surgeries and painful medical treatments in her young life. When Samantha was referred to The Rainbow Connection, the charity that makes dreams come true for Michigan children diagnosed with life threatening illnesses, she knew just what she wanted! Samantha's most recent surgery was in October of 2007 but that didn't stop her and the family from getting to the Walt Disney Christmas Day parade. Greeted with warm weather and lots of sunshine, Samantha was seated in the VIP viewing area at the parade. She beamed when she actually met Regis and Kelly in person and sat just feet away from The Jonas Brothers as they performed! In addition to the parade Samantha enjoyed all seven Disney theme parks and stayed at the magical "Give Kids the World" village where the ice cream parlor is always open and Samantha was treated like the princess that she is.

Mary Grace McCarter, Executive Director at The Rainbow Connection, explains "It is only with the help of the generous people of Michigan that we have been able to make Samantha's dream come true and the dreams of 120 other Michigan children in 2007. To see these children so happy and so excited would warm any heart and certainly makes our job a joyful one."

The Rainbow Connection focuses its efforts exclusively on Michigan children and their families. Founded in 1985, The Rainbow Connection is a Michigan-based 501c3 charity dedicated to granting wishes for children who are literally fighting for their lives. To date, The Rainbow Connection has granted over 1700 wishes to children across Michigan suffering from life-threatening or terminal illnesses. From something as simple as a new computer to meeting the President of the United States at the White House, to the most requested wish of all, a trip to Disney World, we grant wishes throughout the year.

The Rainbow Connection is more than just a wish, offering support services, information and referral, special holiday get-togethers and picnics, and college scholarships for wish children. The Rainbow Connection receives no federal funds and depends exclusively on the kind generosity of our supporters. Eighty-two cents of every dollar goes to granting Michigan children a wish.

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If you'd like more information about The Rainbow Connection, or to schedule an interview with the family please call 248-601-9474

www.rainbowwishconnection.org