Hanger featured on the Today Show

October 13, 2008
Okeechobee, FL – 18-year-old Kasey Edwards survived an attack by an 11 ½-foot alligator that tore off his left arm four inches from his shoulder. Just four months later, he is learning how to function with a new bionic arm, thanks to Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics, Touch Bionics, and Inner Wheel, a non-profit organization that helps provide pediatric and young adult amputees with computerized prosthetic arms.

NBC's Today Show first reported on Kasey's harrowing encounter with the alligator just days after the attack in June 2008. On Monday, October 13, the Today Show met with Kasey once again to report on his inspirational recovery. Accompanied by his prosthetist Troy Farnsworth, Vice President of the Upper Extremity Program at Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics, Kasey discussed his positive attitude, his desire to move forward, and the difference his new prosthetic arm has made in his life.

Click here to watch Kasey and Troy on the Today Show online.

Kasey Edwards's story – On a warm summer night in June, 18-year-old Okeechobee, FL resident Kasey Edwards decided to go for a swim. He had no idea that in an instant his life would be changed forever.

Kasey had spent the day with friends – washing a buddy's car, watching sports, and eating dinner together. As the evening waned, the college-age friends found themselves sitting on the bank of a canal talking and laughing, when someone mentioned swimming across the canal. Having spent his entire life swimming in local waters, Kasey dove in with sights set on touching the other side and swimming back. Unfortunately, he didn't realize he was in for the fight of his life.

As Kasey reached the opposite side of the canal, he felt an intense pain and a violent tug on his left arm. He turned his head and was face-to-face with an 11 ½-foot alligator. Knowing the alligator's intent of dragging him underwater for the creature's signature death roll, Kasey hung onto a nearby buoy line while the alligator pulled him under the water repeatedly.

Kasey gouged the alligator's eye with his thumb and the reptile recoiled, allowing Kasey to swim as quickly as possible to shore. It wasn't until he noticed he wasn't swimming correctly that he realized his arm was gone. Kasey's survival instincts, the quick thinking from his friends on the water's edge, and the swift response of local EMT saved his life.

Contact: Jennifer Bittner, 904-249-4210, jbittner@hanger.com