



PHOTOS COURTESY OF OCEANS FOR YOUTH

■ Scuba camper Jessie Becker, 20, left, of Cape Cod dives with instructor Adrienne Gibbis off the Cayman Islands. Facing page, Instructor Ron Thompson assists camper Holly Tye.

In 2004, Timmy learned to scuba dive. The experience opened a new world for him.

#### IT MAKES ME FEEL EQUAL

"When I'm underwater scuba diving, it makes me

feel equal. It makes me feel free," says Timmy in the film, "Scuba Diver Dreams" by Davide Molino.

The film shows how Timmy's success led his grandfather to start a summer camp

for cognitively impaired youth through Oceans for Youth Foundation in Naples.

Oceans for Youth is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to educating young people about the ocean.

The first scuba camp for cognitively impaired youths was last July with Timmy and four other young swimmers from across the nation.

"I was kind of nervous at first," says fellow camper Jessie Becker, 20, of Cape Cod. "But I like looking at animals. ... I saw some nurse sharks, sea turtles, different fish.

"It feels like you're in an aquarium. It's awesome."

Camper Scott Landrum even earned his certification. Timmy had been certified just three months prior.

"It just shows me we're the limitation," Johnston says in

the film. "They're not."

#### CHANGING LIVES

The camp was so successful, Oceans for Youth plans to hold another this July.

"It's a wonderful thing they're doing," says Julie Mairano, executive director of Cornelia de Lange Syndrome Foundation Inc. "That exposure to the world that's below the ocean somehow opened up these children."

The parents say there is something magical in the sea, but it was also accomplishing something their children never thought they could do.

"Grampy, he think I couldn't do it," Timmy says. "I proved him wrong."



Timmy Rochon