



# CALIFORNIA DIVER



## DIVE NEWS & EVENTS

# Diveheart makes dreams come true at the Aquarium of the Pacific

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During its 2013 Festival of Human Abilities, the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach hosted Julie and Alex Calvo of Westminster, as they went scuba diving with [Diveheart](#) founder/president Jim Elliott. Diveheart provides scuba diving instruction and opportunities for children and adults with disabilities and wounded veterans.



*Alex Calvo of Westminster is helped by Eric Castillo, assistant dive safety officer. Photo courtesy of the Orange County Register.*

Alex Calvo who is an Army veteran, is quadriplegic as the result of an accident. Although he's not able to dive as often as he'd like, he has found that he greatly enjoys the freedom and mobility that it affords him. Furthermore, he said that his chronic pain is greatly diminished while he dives and for days afterwards. He also experiences greater strength in his arms after having been diving. His wife Julie has become buddy certified and dives with Alex.

Julie and Alex traveled to Cozumel to scuba dive with Diveheart, and were the subject of the inspiring documentary film [Free Fall](#), narrated by Hollywood star Lauren Hutton.

Alex said that diving at the Aquarium was an amazing experience. "Saturday was especially cool because I saw a lot of people I knew from inside the tank. A group of veterans staying at the hospital were able to go and watch. They had heard about me diving, but it was so much more impressive for them to see it in person," he said. "Now they keep asking me about it. Hopefully I have inspired them to try diving, or at least to do something new that is challenging yet rewarding."

Julie, Alex and Diveheart at Festival of Human Abilities were featured in an article about the event in [Orange County Register](#).