

---For Immediate Release---

Expedition provides glimpse of deep coral reefs by human eye researchers to gather imagery and data to depths in excess of 300 feet using advanced manned diving techniques in the Bahamas

November 5, 2010

Providence, RI & Andros, Bahamas

Ocean Opportunity, a Rhode Island based not for profit organization, is proud to announce its forthcoming expedition to explore and document the 'Tongue of the Ocean (TOTO)' to depths in excess of 300 feet. The expedition departs on November 12.

The project includes collaborators from Ocean Opportunity, the University of Connecticut, and local support on the island of Andros, Bahamas where the expedition will be staged.

The deep diving team (including Jeff Godfrey of UConn and Michael Lombardi of Ocean Opportunity) will use advanced manned diving techniques to allow direct, hands-on access to the deep coral reef environment, which will allow careful observations with the human eye. More conventional scientific diving rarely exceeds 100 feet. The study site provides a vertical 'wall' and direct physical linkage from the shallows to more than 2000 feet.

The studies conducted will evaluate the biomechanics and efficiency of humans working at depths considered the 'twilight zone' or 'innerspace' (200-500 feet), and will gather scientific data in this unexplored and alien environment to better understand the biodiversity, natural history, and transitional function of the deep reefs as a gateway from the shallow coral reef to the abyss. Previous work at these depths has resulted in the discovery of numerous new species, never before described for science.

Following the expedition, data and imagery gathered will be prepared for educational use, and for public display throughout the US.

This project is supported by Ocean Opportunity Inc., the University of Connecticut, Shearwater Research, Molecular Products, Small Hope Bay Lodge, Bill & Nancy Clark, and Hugyfot. The team will also be carrying the prestigious Explorer's Club Flag #172 throughout the journey. More information can be found at www.oceanopportunity.com/BahamaDeep.html.

About the University of Connecticut Scientific Diving Program

The University of Connecticut maintains an active research diving program at its Avery Point Campus. The university is an institutional member of the [American Academy of Underwater Sciences](http://www.aauwsc.org). The program serves the research needs of the Dept. of Marine Sciences and the [National Undersea Research Center](http://www.nurc.org). The program is managed by its Diving Safety Officer, Jeff Godfrey, who is a primary collaborator in this expedition. To learn more, visit <http://www.marinesciences.uconn.edu/MSTC/diving.html>.

About Ocean Opportunity

Through exploration, Ocean Opportunity achieves its mission to sponsor, endorse, and facilitate projects and programs in the marine science and technology communities that will foster a new global appreciation for a developing ocean literate society, therefore improving the quality of life on Earth. Ocean Opportunity was founded by author, environmentalist and explorer Michael Lombardi - this expedition's organizer and field team leader. To learn more visit www.oceanopportunity.com.

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