

SUMMER AT SEA

By Annemarie Mannion

Young ocean explorers use cutting-edge equipment to view a whole new world of underwater marvels.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE OCEAN EXPLORATION TRUST HONORS RESEARCH PROGRAM AT go.boyslife.org/oceanhonors



THE OCEAN IS FULL OF MYSTERIOUS creatures. Not many of us get to see them up close.

Eagle Scouts Noah Reardon, 17, and Michael Li, 16, spent time with some of those creatures – and the scientists who study them – last summer.

The guys spent about a month helping scientists conduct research at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography and on board the ship *Nautilus* off the coast of California. Noah, who is a member of Troop 14 from La Grange, Illinois, and Michael, of Troop 660 in Cypress, California, participated in the Ocean Exploration Trust's Honors Research Program. The trust was

founded in 2008 by famed explorer Robert Ballard, who might be best known for his discovery of the wrecked *Titanic* in 1985.

The hands-on experience of researching the world's largest ocean taught Michael a lot.

"I learned so much about all the components that are required to make ocean exploration a possibility," he says. "I learned about the technologies on board that helped develop sonar maps of the ocean floor."

Working a midnight-to-4-a.m. shift when he'd normally be fast asleep wasn't easy for Noah, but it was worth it.

"That shift was a blast, because the scientists were interesting and brilliant and we saw amazing marine life at the bottom of the ocean," Noah says. ✦

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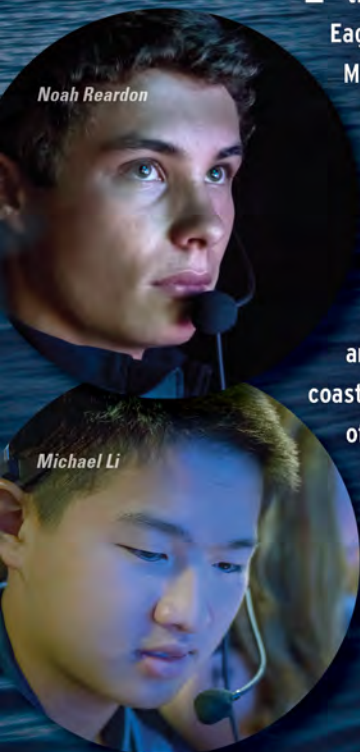
Researchers on the *Nautilus* work with high-tech cameras to view underwater creatures such as this interesting-looking squid and what's left of a whale carcass.

WHAT IS OCEANOGRAPHY?

Oceanography covers all aspects of ocean study and exploration. It's divided into four main branches of study:

- > **CHEMICAL:** The composition of seawater.
- > **BIOLOGICAL:** The plant and animal life in the sea.
- > **GEOLOGICAL:** The physical makeup of the ocean floor.
- > **PHYSICAL:** The properties of seawater, including waves, tides and currents.

Learn more about the Oceanography merit badge at go.boyslife.org/oceanographymb



Noah Reardon

Michael Li

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