

DISCOVER WONDER

TIFFANY DUONG

Ocean advocate and storyteller



There's something special about the blue of the water here.

That silky turquoise is alluring – intoxicating, sometimes. It entices my mind to wander to endless summer days and warm nights under the stars.

Living within the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is a dream come true that I didn't even know I had. Two years ago, I moved to the Keys to restore the coral reefs. I stayed because the reefs restored me. In these waters, I've found my voice, happiness, and purpose.

The ocean has always been a place my soul can rest, but here, in this sanctuary, my imagination has found its muse. Anytime I'm at the bow of a boat, ocean spray whipping through my hair, or diving these magnificent coral reefs, I feel free. There, life is abundant and wild and infinite. I cherish that feeling each and every time I go out on the ocean.

I watch *Cassiopeia* jellyfish live their upside-down lives in the mangroves and nurse sharks pivot in the sand with their fin tips while they patrol the reefs. I swim amongst the corals and sea fans, searching for snapping shrimp, Christmas tree worms, and nudibranchs – all the little denizens of the reef that make it so rich and exciting to explore. There is so much to see, do, feel, and experience. All of it fills me with wonder and gratitude.

As an environmental journalist, it has been my privilege to tell the sanctuary's stories and those of the people who protect this enchanting place. From debris dives to turtle rescues, coral restoration to lionfish derbies, the community comes together over and over to protect this place we call home. Even from land, there are more people engaged in this fight every day than I have ever witnessed. In their tireless endeavors and unwavering conviction, I find courage. In their passions, I find inspiration.

It's truly a blessing to live in a place I don't need a vacation from and to work alongside people willing to do whatever it takes to protect it. I am grateful every day for my little slice of paradise and the opportunity to share its wonder with the world.



[WATCH TIFFANY'S VIDEO](#) ▶

There's an Ocean of Sanctuaries to Discover

Beautiful and awe-inspiring, they are home to miraculous wildlife that soar above and swim below the water's surface. Explore and do your part to help protect these wet and wonderful places.

Discover your story, Discover Wonder.



**National
Marine Sanctuary
Foundation**