



# HOOKED ON DFAC

BY ANTONIO YANG



Left page: Mei and Antonio Yang  
Right page: Antonio with three different tunas

I first came across DFAC a few years ago when my wife was asking Terry Mass about the Freediving Recovery Vest. Through three trips – one in Mexico, one in Channel Islands and another in Panama – I've come to really appreciate this unique organization and the people who surround it, including Colleen Gallagher.

Panama holds a special place in my mind. It was my first time in Panama, and I had never seen a tuna other than on TV. After we arrived at the lodge, at Aqua Adventures Panama (<http://www.hookedonpanama.com>), the group was briefed on the plan for the upcoming days. The plan was for the group of divers to split in two each day. One group would go to the tuna grounds, and the other would go to the local school to do community service.

It was very admirable for Terry to convince the group not to chum the waters. Although our goal was to fill the school's ice chest, we chose to level the playing field and give the tunas a fighting chance. Words don't give justice to the feeling of landing that first tuna. I had pictured the moment in my head multiple times before that day. Having that tuna in my hands was nothing short of a dream come true. That feeling will certainly stay with me for a very long time. Somehow the stars must have been aligned because I landed two more on that trip, and each one was as memorable as the one before. In total, the group harvested plenty of tuna, all of which were well over 100 pounds. I left Panama having met new friends, both divers and locals from the community, and I can't wait to be back this April to lead the community service efforts.

This trip made it clear to me that I would like to contribute to this sport, not as only a participant, but also as a distributor. And so, together with Ian Elstrom, whom I met through DFAC, we formed a new endeavor to sell freediving/spear-fishing equipment. Our company is called Abyss-Diver and will be launching a new line of carbon fiber fins shortly. ■



