



## Swimming with Sam

Jeff Collins and Sam Ramirez hang out in the Women's Building pool. Sam's parents appreciate the personalized training for Sam and the support they receive. "We make connections with other parents, Sam interacts with peers of all levels, and we all have something to look forward to on Friday nights," says Sarah Ramirez. "My husband and I go out on a speed date while Sam is in group." (Note: Jeff's usual buddy is Sam Gelser, who was unavailable for photos)

### *Making an IMPACT: Individualized Movement and Physical Activity for Children Today*

**K**athryn and Doug Collins always taught their son Jeff to give back to his community. As he grew up, he volunteered at school, at the community food drive, for the Kiwanis, and for fundraisers like Corvallis' annual Pumpkin Run. He's worked two jobs for the past eight years, one as groundskeeper at Trysting Tree Golf Course, where he shows up at 5 a.m. six days a week, and the other as part of the lunch shift at the local Burger King. Jeff Collins is an exceptional young man...extraordinary when you learn that this engaging 28-year-old has dealt with a cluster of developmental disabilities his entire life. His mother says that Jeff's participation in IMPACT provides the expectation and support to be part of his community. "He started the program in 1990 when he was 11 and aged out at 21. After a few years of working, Jeff really missed IMPACT.

It was his idea to go back as a volunteer. They matched him with Sam Gelser, and he's been with him ever since," she explains. "The program is a highlight of his week." Jeff is quick to tell you his favorite activity is "swimming with Sam."

Jeff arrives on Fridays at the Women's Building promptly at 5 p.m. to meet with the OSU student IMPACT volunteers as they review their plans for the evening. "Jeff is living the goal of IMPACT – finding his niche and passion and working to his full potential as part of the community and his peer group," says Bekkie Bryan, PhD student and coordinator of the program. "We all love his playful spirit and positive attitude."

IMPACT is a win-win-win for the 85 participants, their parents, and the OSU students, says associate professor JK Yun, who co-directs the program with associate dean

and Distinguished Professor Jeff McCubbin. "The undergraduate students have life-changing experiences working one-on-one with the kids and gain a deeper understanding of human diversity. Many of the master's students will become teachers, so they learn firsthand about children with special needs, and our doctoral students have the skills to replicate this program wherever they go," JK explains. "The IMPACT families will tell you *they* are the winners, with individualized attention for their child and time each week to rejuvenate."



For more information visit [www.hhs.oregonstate.edu/IMPACT](http://www.hhs.oregonstate.edu/IMPACT)

**Daniel McKay, 20, stays in shape exercising at Dixon Rec Center with his IMPACT buddy Cameron Purington, a senior in exercise and sport science. Daniel has been in IMPACT for almost 18 years and especially enjoys swimming, lifting weights, and the climbing wall. Cameron says, "I've broadened my personal training skills working with IMPACT, and the energy and excitement that the participants bring with them each Friday makes it very rewarding."**

