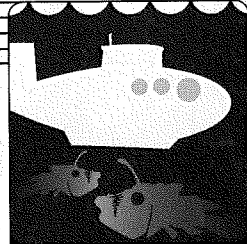




Undergrads Nelson and [unclear] in a 1978 Buick [unclear] and car bomb.



SO YOU WANNA BE AN AQUANAUT

Steer undersea vehicles into the ocean's darkest depths

As a pilot of the 16-ton submersible *Alvin*, Bruce Strickrott spends a total of eight months at sea every year and has clocked roughly 90 deep-sea dives. After six years working in electronics for the U.S. Navy, at 27, Strickrott joined Florida Atlantic University's ocean engineering program. After graduation, he applied to the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution to be a pilot, "pestered them for a month," and landed a spot in the 18-month pilot-training program. To become an *Alvin* pilot, physical endurance, a cool head and steady hands—not to mention a knack for tinkering with equipment—are more important qualifications than an advanced degree. "What we're looking for," Strickrott says, "is someone who has a certain skill set and demeanor and can handle the atmosphere and the close quarters."

—ANNE WOOTTON

- PREREQS:**
- Bachelor's in engineering
 - Facility with electrical systems
 - No claustrophobia

INSETS: COURTESY NIM/ENERGETIC MATERIALS RESEARCH AND TESTING CENTER