



LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD—Beverly Hills actor Luke Zimmerman (left) has joined the regular cast of ABC Family Channel's *The Secret Life Of The American Teenager*. He is shown with castmates Megan Park, John Schneider and Josie Bisset. Molly Ringwald is also in the show's ensemble.

Local Youth Luke Zimmerman Lands Recurring Role On TV's *The Secret Life Of The American Teenager*

Luke Zimmerman, a Beverly Hills actor with Down syndrome, has been cast with the recurring role of Tom Bowman in the ABC Family Channel series *The Secret Life Of The American Teenager*.

John Paizis, director of Performing Arts Studio West, an Inglewood-based acting, music, dance and production studio for performers with developmental disabilities, said that his student (Zimmerman) is appearing opposite Molly Ringwald, Josie Bissett and John Schneider, in the Tuesday night show's current 10-week run.

"We are excited to see Luke being part of this series as it means a great deal for him to be involved and have the opportunity to accurately portray this char-

acter, a son and brother in a modern American family," commented Paizis.

Although historically most TV and film roles portraying characters with disabilities have been cast with non-disabled actors, PASW has been successful in casting actors with disabilities for these roles to bring greater authenticity for these characters.

Since opening its doors in 1998, PASW has booked more than 850 such roles for their performers in such shows as *ER*, *Saving Grace*, *CSI:NY*, *7th Heaven*, and *State Of Grace*.

Zimmerman's own credits include the film *Daughter Of The Streets* and the documentary *All For One*.