

I still remember the day when we all lost Zach. I just happened to be able to take a phone call and I saw it was my brother calling. I knew immediately something was wrong and life would forever change for all of us. We expect parents to pass, but never children or nephews. Zach had grown so much from the time we knew him as a child to the time he passed. Zach was the epitome of what we have experienced in our teaching careers. As a kid, they develop and learn to love the things that really motivated them. Zach was big into hockey and lacrosse through high school. After high school he needed some direction. Zach then joined the Navy and got the necessary direction in life. He made a huge commitment and yes it was tough, but we all saw how much Zach grew from his experience in the Navy. Zach came out a confident and determined man with a mission to become a pilot. I have a passion for aviation, and it was nice to be able to text and or talk about big things that were happening in aviation. We were truly proud of the way Zach pushed himself to new heights, something we all experience in life. Zach clearly also loved his family and always showed that, he always made it home for Christmas and other events when he could.

We took Zach skiing with us one winter break, when his cousins, Erin and Sammy, along with his Aunt Donna and Uncle Mike were here. Shortly into the drive to Loveland, we really learned of Zach's thirst for knowledge. His question asking is as famous as his clothing choices. I finally used a strategy that I've used with kids in my classroom – I told him that he could only ask three more questions all day. Not only will I remember the look on his face when I told him he only had three questions, but I will always remember Caylen laughing while sitting next his brother. When he would begin with, "Aunt Robin..." you could see him stop and really think if that was a question he really wanted to use one of his three questions on. His question asking-skills along with his smile and love of family is what I miss the most.

The memories of Zach will also be with me, his Aunt Michelle. One of the most vivid memories I have of Zach is when he and his sister Candice went back Colorado Springs to spend Christmas night with us. As we left Denver it was snowing pretty bad. I remember looking back and seeing his little head in the backseat, excited to be going to the Springs to spend time with his cousins. He asked a lot of questions that road trip to the Springs with us. Another memory is when he was studying to take his test to get into the Navy. He asked me questions about where my late husband, Mike, was stationed and if we enjoyed living in so many places. He wanted to know everything about Italy and Germany. It was incredibly special telling him about Italy because that is the one place I got to learn more about our Italian heritage.

Zach was a special person. His love for learning, sports, and mostly his family, are lessons for all of us. We are all so proud of the person he grew into from the time he entered the Navy until the time of that fateful moment when we lost him. While he may no longer be with us in person, he is with us in our daily lives as we hear the curious questions, see his smile, and feel his love for all of us.

Greg and Robin Capra
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