



The Takeoff- December 2019

We want to thank all of our family members who have written the previous months inspiration letters. We have loved reading about their relationship with Zach, reminiscing of memories and sharing inspiring words for us to live by. We know this may have been difficult to do as the memories can be comforting by knowing nothing can take those away from us but they also can stir up some difficult emotions of that April day. You all have set the bar for future letters. As hard as it is to lose someone at such a young age, Zach has left his mark on all of us. Even though his life was cut short he has taught us many life lessons that have inspired us to pass those on to others to ensure his spirit lives on.

This month is special as the family will be returning to Daytona Beach where Zach's dream to become a commercial pilot started. John will be competing in the Challenge Daytona Triathlon that is held inside the Daytona International Speedway, one of the most iconic racetracks in the world. Zach's story was shared with the Challenge family and John was chosen to be an Ambassador for the race. John and Zach toured the speedway and shared time together as Zach was getting ready to embark on his dream. John's love for triathlon's inspired Zach to want to train and compete in a triathlon but never had the time, so this race will represent the race that Zach was never able to complete. The area around the speedway was part of Zach's everyday life. The ride will be near and around the airport where he completed several hundred take off and landings and will also travel on Tomoka Farms Road where his dreams were cut short. We believe that Zach's spirit will be a guiding light and will be "my rock and whom I trust and he will raise me up on eagles wings" as John competes in this race.

Christmas was Zach's favorite holiday and we have many fond memories we will forever hold close to our heart. As a child he was always the first one up, ready to open presents which he made very challenging to keep secret. His stocking was always full of peanut butter cups and sour candy and he loved the fresh baked cookies and pizzelle's that were always around. Zach was a generous person when it came to gifts and that didn't change when he was deployed to the Persian Gulf where he picked up items at the various ports and was always excited to send them home. Little did we know that Christmas 2017 was going to be his last with us. We had so many things to be thankful for that year. Zach was home more that year than any other year since he joined the Navy. The memories of that last year are such a blessing. Christmas gives us the opportunity to pause and reflect on the important things around us. Zach's absence this Christmas will wholeheartedly be felt, however, the experiences he left with us will carry us through the holidays and his spirit will be with us as we celebrate with the family all the joy we



shared when he was here....just as he would want us to. The love of a family is life's greatest gift.

We wish you the blessings of peace, the beauty of hope, the spirit of love, and the comfort of faith. May these be your gifts this Christmas season.

-John and Patsy Capra

December 4, 2019