



## The Takeoff- July 2020

Gone too Soon

This was a life that hardly begun  
No time to find your place in the sun  
No time to do all you could have done  
But we loved you enough for a lifetime

No time to enjoy the world and its wealth  
No time to take life down off the shelf  
No time to sing the songs of yourself  
Though you had enough love for a lifetime

Those who live long endure sadness and tears  
But you'll never suffer the sorrowing years  
No betrayal, no anger  
No hatred, no fears  
Just love, only love in your lifetime

*Unknown*

Zachary Michael Capra

How do we measure friendship? Time, happiness, love, laughter, character, commitment, trust? My time with Zach was short but he possessed all of these traits in our friendship and in every aspect of his life. I was first introduced to Zach when he was enlisted in the United States Navy. At the time he was travelling abroad serving his country but we connected immediately. Our friendship consisted mostly of text messages and always a familiar morning facebook post, but I always felt that Zach was with me riding in my truck.

Zach and I shared memories of hockey, pranks, cars, girls and the love we both had for our fathers. Zach and I spoke a lot about my fathers' time as a Marine. As I reflect back, I never got to tell Zach that I was inspired by his hard work, dedication and the position he landed in the Navy. His text messages and posts reminded me to always follow my dreams, that anything is possible.

As many of us do, I looked to Coach as a father figure in my life. Not only did it bring me great pleasure to see Coach watch Zach find his path to personal growth, the love of his



profession and the excitement of flight in the pursuit of his happiness, but I was also inspired by John in completing a 140.6 mile Ironman race. Zach would frequently comment on how proud he was of his father. It was then that I realized a dream that I wanted to follow.

Zach was back from his time in the Navy and preparing to take his next step in his pursuit of happiness with continuing his education at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Before he could leave however, he had one very important thing he needed to do, watch his father race. John and I both qualified for the USA Triathlon age group nationals in Omaha Nebraska and it couldn't have come at a better time. We set out on a road trip to Omaha where not only would Zach get to watch his father race but would also be the first opportunity I had to enjoy my friendship with Zach in person. The road trip was full of love, laughter, and Zach driving too fast (God he loved that car), As triathletes we are always trying for the best time and outcome but this race was different, it had much more meaning. This race wasn't about our finish time, rather it was the time we spent together and a father's love.

Watching my mentor be medaled by his son solidified to me that a father's love can never be broken. Following the race, Zach and Coach continued on the road trip that would move Zach to begin his career at flight school in Daytona, FL. As we went our separate ways, I hugged my friend and told him I will always be your wingman and you never leave your wingman. I never imagined that would be the last time I would see Zach.

Zach found flight, happiness and love. He will forever be missed.

Train hard, race fast and love slow.

-Mikey Rosen

July 4, 2020