

LT DAVID SCHMITZ
FOUNDATION

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- You have generously donated over \$43,000 to the Lt David Schmitz Foundation. Thank you for so much for your generosity!
- The Foundation hosted its first virtual 5K to raise money for aviation scholarships
- The 4th Airlift Squadron at McChord AFB officially dedicated their Mission Planning Area to MEZr
- Valerie received a custom, commissioned painting of Dave

THE MEZr UPDATE

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LT DAVID SCHMITZ FOUNDATION

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- * Welcome & updates
- * Personal note from Schmitz Family
- * Successful first Virtual 5K
- * Memorial Mission Planning Area at McChord AFB dedicated to MEZr
- * Valerie receives commissioned artwork of David
- * Steel Heart bracelets made with donations going to Foundation



Welcome and Thank you!

Welcome to the Lt. David Schmitz Foundation's first newsletter! First, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude for your generosity. As of December 6th, you have donated \$43,459 to the scholarship foundation GoFundMe page. Wow!

We are deeply moved by and grateful for your outpouring of love and support. This money will be used to fund aviation scholarships for young, aspiring pilots to help them follow their dreams as David did.

Lt. David Schmitz
Foundation GoFundMe
donations:

\$43,459

(and rising!)



Brian and Sherrie Schmitz at the
Inaugural 5K Race

Personal Note from MEZr's Family



From left: Isaac Stewart, Laura Stewart (Schmitz), Sherrie Schmitz, Brian Schmitz, David Rudolph, Valerie Schmitz, and Donna Rudolph after MEZr's memorial service in Sumpter, SC

We want to deeply and sincerely thank you for your financial contribution to the Lt David Schmitz Foundation. We are the parents of Lt David "MEZr" Schmitz, and your giving has deeply warmed our hearts during our grief – a grief you have shared with us. To the contributors whose names we recognize, to those who marked their donation "Anonymous," and to those we don't know...THANK YOU. The week following David's mishap, we were in and around Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina, participating in many memorials and tributes to MEZr. These were exceptional events for all in attendance, but we were not prepared for one thing that happened.

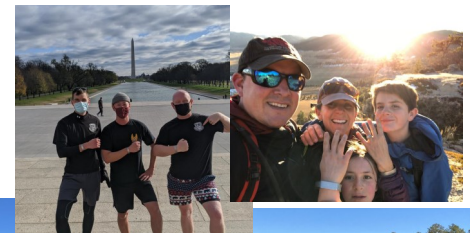
People from around the world that knew David from his diverse Air Force assignments shared incredible stories too numerous to recall—most of which we had never known—about how David had sacrificed his time and energy to make others successful, in what would normally be considered a very competitive environment. For us, the key thing we learned that week, from the eulogies delivered and from an informal "open mic night," was this consistent practice of David reaching out to help others achieve their dreams. For that reason, the Foundation is even more meaningful, since it's a practical way to continue that legacy of helping others accomplish their dreams.

Brian & Sherrie Schmitz
David's Parents

First Virtual 5K!

#DoubleDownforDavid was the resounding cry this past week as hundreds took to the streets to honor MEZr as part of the Foundation's inaugural virtual 5K race.

Documenting their paces using the Strava app, participants could complete their 5K anytime between Nov. 30 and Dec. 6—from anywhere in the world. The Foundation appreciates the inspiration and initiative shown by the cadets of San Diego State University's Detachment 075 (Lt Schmitz's former Air Force ROTC Detachment) for their efforts to kick-start this 5K race! As of Dec 8th, the race had 196 total participants and raised a total of \$11,534 (more are still coming in!) toward aviation scholarships for future aviators. A huge thank you to Cadet Allison Phillips,



Virtual 5K participants across the nation



Commemorative 2020 5K Patch

the Det 075 race coordinator—who was critical in making this first virtual 5K a success! Additionally, Majors Jeffrey Campeau and Michael Clark, friends and classmates of Lt Schmitz, deserve a round of applause for their leadership in coordinating races across the country.

In honor of this inaugural 2020 race, Major Campeau, in collaboration with the experts at Aviator Gear, designed a commemorative race patch (see left) that will be available for all virtual 5K participants. Shout out to Aviator Gear for their donation of 100 patches towards this great cause!

As you can see, the patches featured a stunning illustration of MEZr (complete with his signature smile and hair!) and a tribute to the missing man formation.

THE MEZR
UPDATE



Courtesy of 4th Airlift Squadron

Before David began his journey as a fighter pilot, he had a career as a Loadmaster as part of the 4th Airlift Squadron at McChord Air Force Base in Tacoma, WA. He remained deeply connected to his fellow airmen even after moving from the Fighting Fourth.

After the mishap, the 4th Airlift Squadron honored Dave (or "Schmitty" as he was known by the

4th) by dedicating their Mission Planning Area to him.

"Anytime we plan, brief or enter the tactics vault, we'll be reminded of Schmitty's dedication to his aviation profession...as a Loadmaster & Pilot," wrote Lt Col Sean Burke in a post on the 4th Airlift Squadron Facebook page.

"Any and all Fighters, past or present, are always welcome in the Fourth to grab a beverage and remember our Fourth Family member."

Thank you Fighting Fourth for honoring Dave in this special way!



Dedication Ceremony of the Lt David "Schmitty/MEZr" Schmitz Mission Planning Area

Valerie Receives Commissioned Artwork



Painting Presentation to Valerie

The Gamblers and Black Sheep F-16 squadrons commissioned UK artist Matthew Emeny to create an original painting based on a cockpit photo Valerie had taken of David

during his first F-16 solo at Holloman Air Force Base.

Emeny worked with F-16 pilot Evan Forrest, who knew David at Holloman, to create a detailed, lifelike portrait with a few key additional elements not in the original photo.

The jet in the painting displays 'LT David "MEZr" Schmitz' to match an actual Gamblers F-16 revealed in a tribute after David's mishap. His helmet shows a visor cover also posthumously created by the Gamblers to honor MEZr.

"The Project has to be one of the

most humbling paintings I have ever been asked to create. It was truly an honor to paint the scene and I am thankful that I was asked to undertake such a special and meaningful tribute to a young pilot lost in the prime of his life and a painting that can be cherished by his wife," Emeny said.

A limited-edition print of the painting has been created with 77 prints representing the 77th Fighter Squadron (the Gamblers).

Prints in four sizes are still available for sale by contacting the artist at: matthew@emenyart.com.

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Steel Hearts Designs Bracelets in Memory of David

After David's mishap, Steel Hearts, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to honoring fallen military members, created a commemorative bracelet in memory of David. The bracelet reads:

1st Lt David "MEZr" Schmitz
June 30th, 2020 - 77th FS
'A Nickel on the Grass'

The bracelet also includes both the 4th Airlift Squadron and 77th Fight-

er Squadron emblems, in honor of David's service in both communities.

For every bracelet sold, \$10 goes to the Lt David Schmitz Foundation. Bracelets are available for purchase at "

<http://www.steel-hearts.org/usaf-rotc/1st-lt-david-mezr-schmitz>

Col Liz Scott (former Commander of the 4th Airlift Squadron) and her family wear David's Steel Hearts bracelet



Lt David Schmitz Foundation

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#DoubleDownforDave

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About the Foundation



David Schmitz at age 16 when he was gifted an aerobatic flight by two family friends (Randy and Martha)

The Lt David Schmitz Foundation's (Itschmitzfoundation.org) mission is to foster opportunities for young, aspiring aviators to achieve their goal of flying in honor of Lt David "MEZR" Schmitz's legacy of overcoming life's obstacles to achieve his dream of flying.

The Foundation provides aviation scholarships to be used toward flight school and any tests needed to achieve their private pilot's license.

Your donation will go directly towards benefiting aviators like Dave, who are passionate, hard working, and have a strong will to succeed!

You can donate on the foundation's GoFundMe page at:

<https://www.gofundme.com/flt-david-schmitz-scholarship-foundation>