

**AWS1 James Philip Buriak, USN** died 31 August 2021 in a Naval helicopter crash LOOSEFOOT 616 off the coast of San Diego where he served as a naval aircrewman rescue swimmer (AWS) with HSC-8.

Jimmy was born, 09 May 1990 in Salem, VA. He graduated from Salem High School, Roanoke College in 2012 and joined the Navy in 2017. He spent time training in San Diego and Pensacola before being assigned to HSC-8 in Coronado, CA. He deployed aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt for two back-to-back tours and multiple detachments before departing for his final flight on the USS Abraham Lincoln.

Jimmy was an uncommon man. He held qualities that could not be given, but rather earned. He was an exemplary dad who loved his son, both a husband and a soul mate to his wife, and a beloved son and brother. Jimmy was an avid crossfitter who would put your endurance and strength to task. He prided himself on physical fitness and being able to protect not only his family, but others if needed. The best example of his courage, heroism, and ability that live up to the motto “So Others May Live” is when he got his first save at Gun Beach, Guam on 08 February 2020 while off duty and earned the Navy Commendation Medal. When asked about saving a drowning tourist while off duty he stated, “I just happened to be the person there, and I would like to think that regardless of who it was, they would have done the same. Someone said they needed help, and anyone would do the same in my shoes.” Jimmy loved his family and lived everyday like it was his last. He held his friends and family close, and built memories that will last a lifetime.

Jimmy was special, there was never a person he met that didn't like him. If you knew him, you loved him and that was Jimmy. He had honor, integrity, and courage. He fought when he was right and backed down when he was wrong. He worked hard, and even if he didn't agree, he would do what was asked of him. He was courageous, strong and resilient. He was it, he always had it, whatever that took or was- he was your boy. He was courageous both in life and in death. His devotion to his people- his family, friends and fellow crewman- has rarely been equaled.

He is survived by his wife, Megan; son, Caulder James Philip; parents, James, and Carol Buriak; as well as his sister, Laura and brother-in-law, Eric Zickefoose.

A non-profit was opened in his honor, The *AWS1 James Buriak Foundation* to serve those families of Naval and Marine Corps aviation mishaps.

Jimmy lived by the following rules for success:

1. Do the work, don't be lazy.
2. Stop waiting, it is time.
3. Rely on yourself, the universe doesn't care.
4. Be practical, success is not a theory.
5. Be productive early.
6. Don't be a baby, life is hard- get on with it.
7. Don't hang out with halfwits.
8. Don't waste energy on things you cannot control
9. Don't be a people pleaser.
10. Don't do the same thing over and over and expect things to happen.

***“Those who have enjoyed such privileges as we enjoy forget in time that men have died to win them.”  
Franklin D. Roosevelt***