



Lt. Nathan Poloski was born in San Diego, CA on Feb. 6, 1988. He spent his early years living near what was then the Miramar Air station. His parents started taking him to Blue Angels air shows before he could walk, starting his lifelong enthusiasm for planes.

Poloski attended elementary school in Texas, and then moved back to California, where he graduated from Lake Arrowhead's Rim of the World High School near the top of his class. He couldn't decide whether to become a fighter pilot or a doctor, so he decided to do both: He attended the U.S. Naval Academy, graduating in 2009, and planned to attend medical school after some years in the cockpit.

His high school classmates voted him best dresser, even though not all of his fashions went over well, his mother, Miriam Kendrick, recalled. Laughing, she described a jacket with a big fur collar that might have been appropriate in New York but earned him quite a bit of teasing in the San Bernardino Mountains. "He had another phase when he was country. He went to school with the biggest belt buckle you've ever seen in your life."

Nathan also embraced athletics, participating in marathons, weight training, cycling, hiking, surfing, snowboarding, skiing and mud runs, his family said. "He liked fast cars and expensive motorcycles and cherished his niece and nephew," said his sister, 29-year-old Jacqueline Clements of Austin, Texas.

In April of 2014, Poloski became a member of Strike Fighter Squadron 94, based in Lemoore, Calif.

"Nathan was an outstanding person, naval officer and aviator," CDR Michael Langbehn, commanding officer of Poloski's squadron, said in a statement. "My personal thoughts and prayers are for his family, friends and shipmates as they endure this immeasurable loss."