

CHENG *Dynasty*

Story by MC3 Sean Lynch
Layout by MC3 Terence Deleon Guerrero

Some boys grow up wanting to be like their fathers and, despite a hands-off approach, end up following in their father's footsteps. Others attempt to blaze their own trail, yet carry the lessons their fathers taught them into their unfolding lives.

Cmdr. Randy Reid, chief engineer of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) has a 21-year-old son, Midshipman 1st Class Zachary Reid, currently enrolled in the Reserve Officer Training Corps at Virginia Military Institute. Midshipman Reid embarked on TR as part of the TR 2019 Midshipman Summer Cruise.

"I think it is cool to have my son aboard," said Cmdr.

Reid. "He is seeing what I do underway. Zachary has been on tiger cruises before, but this is where he can fully understand and appreciate what it is like to be underway on an aircraft carrier."

When Midshipman Reid arrived on TR, he greeted his father with a hug. Cmdr. Reid then showed him around the ship and the pair had dinner together in the wardroom.

"I get to see firsthand what my dad does on a daily basis," said Midshipman Reid. "This is my dad's last sea tour, and this is my first chance to be out to sea on a Navy ship, so it's like my dad is passing the baton to me. It's an incredible experience."



ZACHARY REID
MIDSHIPMAN

CMDR RANDY REID
CHIEF ENGINEER

Photo by
MC3 Erick A. Parsons

According to Cmdr. Reid, he understands the difficulty of being both a father and a Sailor, and attributes his parental success to the partnership he has with his wife.

"I have to give a lot of credit to my wife," said Cmdr. Reid. "We have always worked as a team to be parents. She has been the on-site parent more than I have due to a ship's underway schedule."

Midshipman Reid also recounted how his mother and father worked as partners to raise their children.

"When I was really young, I grew up with my mom and that was nothing my dad could control. He was constantly going out to sea," said Midshipman Reid.

According to Cmdr. Reid, it's important to balance the demands of being a Sailor with the responsibilities of being a parent.

"I always tried to be a part of my kids' lives whenever I could," said Cmdr. Reid. "Whenever I was home, I always spent time with my wife and kids. But it's hard to find that balance, so you have to make the most of every moment and you have to make it count."

Midshipman Reid said when his father was at home, he would do his best to make every moment special.

"My dad and I would ride bikes and go hiking. He took control of a boy scout troop when I was in the boy scouts," said Midshipman Reid. "We all went scuba diving as a family. My dad actually got his master scuba diver license so that he could take our whole family."

Despite his military pedigree, Cmdr. Reid said he made it a point to not influence his children into pursuing a career in the service.

"I never really pushed the military on my son," said Cmdr. Reid. "I was surprised when he decided to go down that route. I did not expect it at all. I was shocked."

Midshipman Reid said when he told his parents he wanted to join the military, his father did his best to make sure he was making the most informed choice possible.

"When I told my parents I wanted to join the military, my dad didn't push me, but he definitely supported me," said Midshipman Reid. "There was an awesome moment where my dad gave me the opportunity to go talk to people other than him about the Navy."

When Cmdr. Reid's son told him he wanted to become a Naval officer, he offered some advice.

"I told my son to do the best you can, and have fun with it," said Cmdr. Reid. "Give it your all and you will get out of it what you put into it."

According to Cmdr. Reid, he supports his son's decision to join the military, but even more so about his happiness.

"I just hope my son is successful," said Reid. "If he is not happy being in the military, I don't want him to do it. If he is happy and he really enjoys the lifestyle, then I hope the best for him. But, at the same time, I hope he learns the balance between family and work."



Cmdr. Reid, right, and his son, Zachary Reid, after a Color Me Rad 5K in Virginia Beach, Va. Photo courtesy of Cmdr. Reid.



Zachary Reid, right, with his mother and younger sister, Samantha, in Guam. Photo courtesy of Cmdr. Reid.



Cmdr. Reid, right, and Midshipman Reid pose for a photo in CHENG's office. Photo by MC3 Sean Lynch.