

David Varner

Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy

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Lieutenant Commander David Varner was born in Libertyville, Illinois, and grew up in El Reno, Oklahoma. He graduated as salutatorian from El Reno High School in 1988 where he lettered in varsity baseball. David then attended the U.S. Naval Academy and graduated in 1992 with a Bachelor of Science degree in general engineering.

David was a research assistant at the Los Alamos National Laboratory until July 1993 when he reported to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, Florida, for aviation indoctrination. He completed primary flight training at NAS Whiting Field, Florida, and transferred to NAS Meridian, Mississippi, for intermediate flight training. He completed advanced flight training at NAS Kingsville, Texas, and received his wings of gold in August 1995. David then reported to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 (VMFAT 101) at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, California, for training in the F/A-18 Hornet.

In November 1996, David moved to NAS Lemoore, California, and began his first fleet tour with the Strike Fighter Squadron 151 "Vigilantes." While attached to the Vigilantes, David completed two six-month Western Pacific deployments aboard the aircraft carrier *USS Constellation (CV 64)*. He flew multiple missions in support of *Operation Southern Watch*, the U.S. presence near North and South Korea and numerous international exercises. He served as aircraft division officer, NATOPS officer, air-to-air training officer, training officer and landing signal officer.

In January 2000, David transferred to the VFA 125 "Rough Raiders" where he served as an F/A-18 instructor pilot and landing signal officer. He was qualified to instruct in all phases of the F/A-18 training syllabus.

David has accumulated more than 2,200 flight hours and 371 carrier landings. His personal awards include two Air Medals, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, two Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, the Battle Efficiency Award and various other service and unit awards.