



21 December 2025

Dear Classmates,

It is my sad duty to report that our Classmate, [Mike D'Ambra, passed away Friday, 12 December 2025](#), after a bravely fought battle with brain cancer.

Mike was born in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, and enlisted in Navy in 1982, selected for Nuclear Power Training. He received an appointment to the Naval Academy in 1983. He was a 26th company plebe and graduated with 29th Company, with a degree in Marine Engineering. Mike was one of five in the family to attend the Naval Academy: His father **Rudolph '49**, and 3 brothers **David '80**, **Charles '87**, and **Mark '92**.

Mike reentered the nuclear navy and completed NPS in 1989. He served aboard USS *John Marshall* (SSN-611) from 1989 to 1992 as part of the decomm crew, holding multiple roles, including Nuclear Engineer Officer (Electrical), Reactor Controls Assistant, and Nuclear Engineer Officer (Main Propulsion). He later served at Commander, Submarine Force Atlantic (COMSUBLANT) as a Staff Plans Officer from 1992 to 1994. In 1994, Michael continued his dedication to the Navy as a civilian with NELODET, where he managed in-service engineering requirements and guided the NLODET, Engineering Division. He served with distinction until 2023. Michael's professionalism and leadership were recognized through numerous honors, including the DON Superior Civilian Service Award - the second-highest honor a civilian can receive from the Department of the Navy. From 2023 to 2025, he worked at L3Harris, continuing his lifelong commitment to engineering.

Outside of his professional life, Michael found joy in golfing, reading, and traveling. His favorite place was Walt Disney World, and he truly remained a kid at heart. Above all else, Michael valued his family and friends. Michael married the love of his life, Diane Lynn Yingling in August 1987. Together they shared 38 years of marriage.

He is survived by his mother, Matilda Lucy Simpson; his wife, Diane Lynn Yingling D'Ambra; his son, Christopher D'Ambra; his daughter, Nicole D'Ambra (Sadie Zuminsky); his sisters, Christine D'Ambra (Nick Roth), Mary Rey, and Joanne Wehunt (Chris Wehunt); his brothers, David D'Ambra (Judy D'Ambra), Stephen D'Ambra (Beth D'Ambra), Charles D'Ambra (Carole D'Ambra), and Mark D'Ambra (Andrea D'Ambra); his uncle, Joseph Simpson (Karen Simpson); his aunt, Freddie Simpson; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins. He was preceded in death by his father, Rudolph Francis D'Ambra.

29th Company is hosting a Celebration of Life Zoom call on **Wednesday, 14 January 2026 at 2000 EDT**.

Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86900583314?pwd=Kxch8ViBtmxrukGcRsSgGadBj64GJk.1>

Meeting ID: 869 0058 3314; Passcode: 627354 Please contact Chris Hodges [240.401.2466] for any questions.

A memorial service will be held at USNA at a future date, to be announced. Michael will be interred at the United States Naval Academy Columbarium. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: The [Glioblastoma Foundation](#), P.O. Box 62066, Durham, NC 27715.

Please take a moment and join me in remembering Mike. RIP Classmate.

Scott Herbener
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