



**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AIR MEDAL**

TO

**JOHN K. BREWER
AVIATION STRUCTURAL MECHANIC FIRST CLASS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Petty Officer BREWER is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight while serving as Flight Mechanic aboard Coast Guard HH-60J CGNR 6027 on the night of 2 September 1998. At 2330 hours, CGNR 6027 launched from Aviation Training Center Mobile to assist the fishing vessel CAN TOO, which had capsized, throwing its crew into the storm-tossed sea. To save the fishermen's lives, the aircrew flew directly into the oncoming path of Hurricane Earl, a category one hurricane churning in the Gulf of Mexico. While searching in the extreme conditions, the aircrew located two survivors clinging to the overturned hull. Once the aircraft was established in a hover, Petty Officer BREWER provided precise conning commands, expertly deploying the rescue swimmer before recovering the survivors from the rolling water. As each survivor was hoisted, Petty Officer BREWER struggled against the strong winds to prevent the cable from swinging while keeping the rescue swimmer in sight. With the survivors and swimmer safely in the cabin, Petty Officer BREWER secured the cabin and continued the search for the remaining survivor. One hour later a third survivor was located clinging to floating debris. Once more, Petty Officer BREWER expertly conned the aircraft into position, skillfully deploying the rescue swimmer and recovering the third survivor as the aircraft was buffeted by the violent conditions. His exceptional crew coordination and professionalism were instrumental in the rescue of three persons, who otherwise would have perished in the hurricane driven seas. His courage, judgment and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.