



**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF  
THE COAST GUARD COMMENDATION MEDAL  
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A SECOND)**

**TO**

**LIEUTENANT JEFFERY R. McCULLARS  
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant McCULLARS is cited for outstanding achievement on the night of 2 September 1998 while serving as co-pilot aboard Coast Guard HH-60J CGNR 6027. At 2330 hours, the helicopter 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 of CGNR 6027 flew directly into the oncoming path of Hurricane Earl, a Category One hurricane churning in the Gulf of Mexico. Despite darkness, low ceilings, violent rain squalls, and wind gusts to 70 knots, he skillfully navigated the crew to scene. Enroute, he coordinated the search, programmed the navigational computer, and handled radio communications. Through his efforts, the aircrew located two survivors clinging to the overturned hull. He vigilantly provided crucial altitude and wave height safety calls as the pilot executed a "no-reference" hover. He continued to provide safety backup during the swimmer deployment, allowing the pilot to concentrate on the exhausting task of recovering the survivors from the breaking seas. Once the survivors and rescue swimmer were safely aboard, he developed a search plan for the missing crewman. Using night vision goggles, he located a third survivor clinging to floating debris. Again, he provided crucial safety back-up calls as the third survivor was recovered. 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 dedication, judgment and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard,

The Operational Distinguishing Device is authorized.