



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

TO

**JOSEPH "TY" CARDONA
AVIATION ELECTRICIAN'S MATE THIRD CLASS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Petty Officer CARDONA is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on the night of 31 December 1990 and early morning hours of 1 January 1991 while serving as flight mechanic of Coast Guard HH-3F 1489 engaged in the search and rescue of three men of the fishing vessel SEA BIRD which had capsized and sunk in 8-12 foot seas 45 nautical miles southeast of Cape Fear, North Carolina. Dispatched from Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, the helicopter flew to the scene and commenced search operations using night vision goggles and forward-looking infrared sensor. With the breaking seas, 35 knot winds and few visual references for hovering, Petty Officer CARDONA lowered the rescue basket and conned the pilot to the survivors. During the first hoist Petty Officer CARDONA acted quickly to prevent injury, grabbing the basket as the panic-stricken survivor tried to leap from the basket into the cabin. At one point during the hoisting the hoist mechanism failed, causing the cable to run out uncontrollably. Petty Officer CARDONA rapidly fixed the problem and hoisted the survivors to safety. Petty Officer CARDONA'S actions and aeronautical skill were instrumental in the rescue of three men. His courage, judgement and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.