



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

TO

**JONATHAN D. KRESKE
AVIATION SURVIVAL TECHNICIAN FIRST CLASS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Petty Officer KRESKE is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on 6 February 2023 while serving as Rescue Swimmer aboard Coast Guard Helicopter CG-6006. Responding to a report of the Fishing Vessel ETHEL MAY in distress and sinking near Willapa Bay, WA, CG-6006 rapidly launched at night in low visibility due to driving heavy rain. The crew arrived on scene to find a large debris field in ten-foot breaking, confused seas. After locating a life raft, Petty Officer KRESKE deployed into frigid, 40-degree breaking surf where he swam through spilled oil, vessel debris, and scattered fishing gear to find two survivors huddled semi-conscious in the flooded raft, both severely hypothermic and fully entangled in lines. With debris-laden seas continuously crashing onto him, Petty Officer KRESKE used his knife to free the first survivor, now disoriented and combative, and carefully hoisted him into the helicopter. Despite perilous conditions, Petty Officer KRESKE deployed into the turbulent seas again. While hoisting the second survivor and ten feet above the crashing waves, ensnaring lines became taut, pulling the fisherman back into the chaotic sea until Petty Officer KRESKE quickly cut them away. Petty Officer KRESKE's actions and skill were instrumental in the rescue of two lives. 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.