



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

**TO**

**LIEUTENANT (JUNIOR GRADE) THURMAN T. MAINE  
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant (Junior Grade) MAINE is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on the night of 13 March 1993 while serving as Aircraft Commander of Coast Guard HH-3F helicopter CGNR 1486, Launched from Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, Florida. The crew of CGNR 1486 was diverted from an active search and rescue case to immediately assist the merchant vessel FANTASTICO, reported to be taking on water and sinking 60 nautical miles west of Fort Myers, Florida. Flying through extremely violent weather as the "Storm of the Century" raged in the Gulf of Mexico, the crew arrived on scene and located two persons being tossed about by the raging waves. Lieutenant (Junior Grade) MAINE maneuvered the helicopter into a hover over the two survivors. Demonstrating exceptional flying skill, he maintained a no-visual-reference hover at night, in 25-foot seas, with winds gusting to 45 knots, while the rescue swimmer was deployed to assist with the recovery of the exhausted, hypothermic survivors. The first survivor was quickly recovered, but the hoisting of the second person was delayed due to the individual having a severely injured leg. Lieutenant (Junior Grade) MAINE tenaciously maintained the helicopter in position to safely recover this survivor and the rescue swimmer. His exceptional control of the aircraft, despite abrupt altitude displacements of 25 to 30 feet, and erratic attitude changes as the storm battered the helicopter, were critical to this rescue. Lieutenant (Junior Grade) MAINE's actions and aeronautical skills were instrumental in the rescue of two persons. 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.