



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

TO

**ALFRED L. MUSGRAVE
AVIATION MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN SECOND CLASS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Petty Officer MUSGRAVE is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on 23 March 2008 while serving as Flight Mechanic aboard Coast Guard HH-65C helicopter CGNR 6566 deployed aboard USCGC MUNRO on patrol in the Bering Sea. Early Easter morning, the F/V ALASKA RANGER, a 192-foot catcher-processor with 47 persons on board, reported taking on water 125 miles west of Dutch Harbor, Alaska. Soon afterwards, the flooding became uncontrollable and all hands were forced to abandon ship into the frigid Bering Sea. As USCGC MUNRO plowed through the waves at flank speed, amid freezing spray and 30-degree rolls, Petty Officer MUSGRAVE labored doggedly to maneuver the aircraft out of the hangar and prepare it for immediate launch. Arriving at the vessel's last known position amidst snow squalls and 30-knot winds, the crew witnessed an epic scattering of dimly lit strobe lights from the mariners who had abandoned ship into the turbulent, wind-swept seas. Knowing that survival time was waning rapidly, Petty Officer MUSGRAVE aggressively commenced rescue operations. Overcoming minus 24-degree wind chill and few visual cues, he masterfully guided the helicopter during 11 basket hoists and rescue swimmer deployments, rescuing 5 mariners from the icy darkness. Displaying unparalleled stamina and strength, Petty Officer MUSGRAVE battled 10-foot breaking waves that produced unpredictable 40-foot lateral surges of the rescue basket, an ice coated cabin floor, and the physically demanding task of removing multiple hypothermic survivors whose water-filled survival suits nearly doubled their weight. With the aircraft perilously low on fuel and with the cabin completely full, Petty Officer MUSGRAVE precisely deployed the aircraft's raft to three additional survivors that remained in the water; an act that allowed them to survive until additional rescue forces arrived. Petty Officer MUSGRAVE's actions and aeronautical skill were instrumental in saving 8 people from certain death in the Bering Sea. 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.