



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

**TO**

**LIEUTENANT BENJAMIN J. BERMAN  
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant BERMAN is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on 21 July 2012 while serving as Aircraft Commander onboard Coast Guard helicopter CGNR 6013 during the rescue of a critically injured hiker on Mount Rainier, Washington. First completing the successful rescue of a stranded hiker on an ocean-side cliff, CGNR 6013 was diverted for a severely injured hiker who fell over 400 feet down a steep mountainside in the remote wilderness area of Mount Rainier and suffered serious injuries. Lieutenant BERMAN immediately identified and articulated the hazards and risks of the new case and, after refueling, navigated over 100 NM through unfamiliar mountainous terrain. Lieutenant BERMAN performed power calculation and fuel consumption planning while en-route and determined that a fuel dump was necessary due to power limitations at high altitude. He adroitly coordinated with the SECTOR Command Center to triangulate the proximity of an uninjured hiker with a cell phone 200 feet below the ridgeline, then directed a contour search until the victim was found. Despite the challenges of operating at 7,000 feet density altitude, limited power margins, numerous obstacles, onset of darkness, and a mere one-month experience as an Aircraft Commander, Lieutenant BERMAN maintained a calm professional demeanor, and provided invaluable leadership to the crew. He developed solid risk mitigation strategies, provided his co-pilot with numerous techniques for properly managing limited power reserves, and planned fuel consumption with exacting precision. Lieutenant Berman demonstrated outstanding crew resource management by fully engaging the entire crew, volunteer mountain rescue personnel, and the Air Operations Officer via radio. Lieutenant BERMAN's actions and skill were instrumental in the recovery of two stranded hikers, and the eventual rescue of the critically injured hiker. Lieutenant BERMAN's courage, judgment, and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.