



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

**TO**

**LIEUTENANT (JUNIOR GRADE) MATTHEW L. THOMAS  
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant (Junior Grade) THOMAS is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight while serving as copilot of Coast Guard HH-3F helicopter 1491 during the search and rescue of two survivors of a small private plane which crashed in the White Mountains of New Hampshire on the afternoon of 3 December 1985. Dispatched from Air Station Cape Cod, Lieutenant (Junior Grade) THOMAS precisely navigated the aircraft over the final 50 miles to the crash site through treacherous mountainous terrain despite the loss of the LORAN C equipment. After the wreckage was located, he devised and suggested a sliding approach parallel to the ridge which enabled the aircraft to stay above the turbulence and below the overcast. During the approach, Lieutenant (Junior Grade) THOMAS assisted the aircraft commander by conning him into position over the wreckage. Throughout the entire flight he maintained a calm and professional demeanor. Lieutenant (Junior Grade) THOMAS' actions and aeronautical skills were instrumental in the rescue of the two survivors. courage, judgment, and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.