



**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS**

TO

**LIEUTENANT JOHN D. FILIPOWICZ
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant FILIPOWICZ is cited for heroism while participating in aerial flight on the morning of 19 December 1986. While serving as co-pilot of Coast Guard HH-3F helicopter 1497, Lieutenant FILIPOWICZ assisted in launching the helicopter from Air Station Kodiak and navigating it through the Kupreanof Straits. On scene in the Shelikof Straits, a distressed fishing vessel, battered by 50 to 80-knot winds and 30 to 40-foot seas, was experiencing engine and steering problems and was in danger of capsizing. rescue was further hampered by severe rain squalls which reduced visibility to less than one-half mile. Despite near-impossible conditions, Lieutenant FILIPOWICZ assisted in four attempts to hoist the two victims from their vessel. In desperation and fear that their vessel would soon capsize with them onboard, the fishermen donned survival suits and jumped into the raging sea. Several attempts to land were aborted when towering waves threatened to break over the helicopter. Lieutenant FILIPOWICZ helped position the helicopter directly above the victims for a water hoist. As the fishermen were being lifted to safety, the hoist cable snapped, plunging them back into the sea. Lieutenant FILIPOWICZ quickly briefed the crew for a platform pickup from the water and provided directions for several landing attempts as the aircraft commander struggled against the gale force winds to maintain his position. Lieutenant FILIPOWICZ guided the aircraft commander to a safe landing on the back side of a large swell. The fishermen were immediately pulled onto the platform and the helicopter lifted into a hover. Without regard for his own safety, Lieutenant FILIPOWICZ assisted the aircrew in dragging the survivors aboard. Lieutenant FILIPOWICZ' actions and valor were instrumental in the rescue of two victims. 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.