

Distinguished Public Service Award to

REAR ADMIRAL ROBERT L. JOHANSON, USCG (RET)

The Commandant of the United States Coast Guard takes great pleasure in presenting the Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Award to Rear Admiral Robert L. Johanson, USCG (ret), for his dedicated volunteer work from March 2005 through April 2016. Over this period he served as the Coast Guard Aviation Association's (CGAA) director of the 'Phoenix Project', led the correction and re-dedication of Commander Elmer Fowler Stone's tombstone, and ensured Coast Guard aviation incorporation into the 'Monument to a Century of Flight' in North Carolina. From the beginning, Admiral Johanson distinguished himself while serving as CGAA's director of the 'Phoenix Project'. Admiral Johanson volunteered countless hours to acquire and restore a HH-52A 'Seaguard' helicopter to the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum's standards for permanent display. Admiral Johanson's leadership, fundraising and supervision culminated in the April 2016 induction of the helicopter into the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, the first Coast Guard aircraft displayed in the Nation's premier aviation museum. The helicopter proudly hangs from the ceiling, providing the same view to the over 1.6 million annual visitors that was such a welcome sight to the 20,000 people rescued over its service career. Additionally, Admiral Johanson led the effort to correct the inscription on the tombstone of the Coast Guard's first aviator, Commander Stone, at Arlington National Cemetery. Commander Stone served as the senior pilot aboard NC-4, a Navy flying boat which made the first trans-Atlantic flight in May of 1919. The tombstone had incorrectly listed him as the copilot of that famous flight. Working with the U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy, and Commander Stone's relatives, Admiral Johanson coordinated the correction of his original tombstone. The tombstone now proudly recognizes Commander Stone as the pilot of NC-4, and lists the U.S. and foreign awards received for his courage and skill while undertaking such a daring flight at the infancy of aviation. Working tirelessly with fellow Coast Guard senior aviators, Admiral Johanson ensured Coast Guard Aviation was appropriately incorporated into the 'Monument to a Century of Flight' in Kitty Hawk North Carolina. Raising an unprecedented amount of capital, Admiral Johanson ensured that Coast Guard aviation's enduring legacies, accomplishments and milestones were permanently recorded within the 100 significant events of the first century of aviation. Rear Admiral Robert L. Johanson's, USCG (ret), dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.