



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF THE AIR MEDAL

TO

**AMT2 ROBERT W. BRADLEY
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Petty Officer BRADLEY is cited for heroic achievement in aerial flight from 30 August 2005 to 02 September 2005 while serving as flight mechanic aboard HH-65 helicopters during Hurricane Katrina rescue operations. Demonstrating exemplary aeronautical skill and superlative physical stamina, Petty Officer BRADLEY flew multiple day and night search and rescue missions in a hazardous urban disaster environment. On the night of Hurricane Katrina's passage, Petty Officer BRADLEY assisted with navigating the aircraft through tropical storm force winds, low visibility and within 1/4 mile of unlit towers to arrive at the devastated Mississippi Gulf Coast. Once on scene Petty Officer BRADLEY canvassed the landscape locating a frantic distress signal emanating from a neighborhood decimated by the storm surge. Unable to find a safe landing site, Petty Officer BRADLEY was forced to deploy his rescue swimmer from a 150 foot hover while battling wind gusts in excess of 40 knots. Surrounded by high-tension power lines and towering trees, he completed the demanding hoist four times, saving three lives and recovering the swimmer. After refueling, Petty Officer BRADLEY located an apartment complex on the verge of collapse containing more than 100 survivors. He completed eight basket hoists as the apartments literally crumbled from underneath the survivors' feet. In the midst of this rescue operation, Petty Officer BRADLEY spotted a red flare shot from a stand of trees several miles away. Investigating the flare's source, he located a commercial fishing vessel washed inland by the 30 foot storm surge. Without a rescue swimmer onboard, Petty Officer BRADLEY diverted another HH-65 ultimately saving the lives of four stranded mariners. Later, while operating in the flooded 9th Ward Petty Officer BRADLEY demonstrated exceptional hoisting acumen while completing 10 vertical surface hoists from 2nd story windows and balconies at two apartment complexes surrounded by flood water. Petty Officer BRADLEY's actions and skill were instrumental in saving 23 lives. 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.