



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
HAS AWARDED THE

AIR MEDAL

TO

JAMES W. YOCKEY
AVIONICS ELECTRICAL TECHNICIAN SECOND CLASS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

FOR

MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT IN 28 AUGUST TO SEPTEMBER 2017

GIVEN THIS 26TH DAY OF JULY 2016



A blue ink signature of Paul F. Thomas, written in a cursive style.

For the Commandant
PAUL F. THOMAS
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AIR MEDAL

TO

JAMES W. YOCKEY
AVIONICS ELECTRICAL TECHNICIAN SECOND CLASS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

Petty Officer YOCKEY is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight from 28 August to 02 September 2017 while serving as a Flight Mechanic aboard MH-65 helicopters in support of Hurricane Harvey relief efforts. Battling high winds and torrential rains, he responded to a case of a disabled woman trapped in her apartment with flood water up to her neck. Expertly conning the helicopter just feet from live power lines and trees, he began the arduous rescue. While performing the hoist, the aircraft indicated of a main gearbox pump failure, compounded by a hoist failure and loss of internal communications. Despite this chaotic situation, he maintained focus, quickly switched to vocal commands, and guided the rescue swimmer through live wires and light poles, with the knowledge that the slightest error could jeopardize the swimmer and survivor's lives. Later, he conducted multiple rescues within 10 feet of roof tops, guiding the rescue basket and swimmer through live power lines and obstructions to save 16 people. On a subsequent rescue, he slowly navigated the helicopter street by street to locate and rescue three people from a second story balcony. He then guided the aircraft to land in an intersection, surrounded by traffic lights, vehicles, and power lines, to rescue an elderly diabetic patient in need of emergency dialysis. Petty Officer YOCKEY's actions and aeronautical skill were instrumental in the rescue of 27 people. His courage, judgment, and devotion to duty in the face of hazardous flying conditions are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

