



# THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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

## COAST GUARD MEDAL

TO  
ROBERT R. WILLIAMS  
AVIATION SURVIVAL TECHNICIAN THIRD CLASS  
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD  
FOR

HEROISM ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2005

GIVEN THIS 21st DAY OF MARCH 2006



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THOMAS H. COLLINS  
Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard  
Commandant

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF  
THE COAST GUARD MEDAL  
TO  
ROBERT R. WILLIAMS  
AVIATION SURVIVAL TECHNICIAN THIRD CLASS  
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

**Petty Officer WILLIAMS is cited for heroism on the evening of 1 September 2005 while serving as Rescue Swimmer aboard CG-6539, a Coast Guard HH-65B helicopter. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the levee system in New Orleans was breached, flooding the city and causing a major evacuation of the metropolitan area. CG-6539 was dispatched to conduct rescue efforts for over 150 remaining flood victims stranded on the roof of the Day's Inn Lake Front near Lake Ponchartrain. Petty Officer WILLIAMS was fully briefed on the situation's volatility prior to deploying to the hotel roof. As he disconnected from the hoist, three men brandishing knives and claiming to have a gun accosted and threatened to kill him if they were not rescued first. Without regard for his own safety, Petty Officer WILLIAMS heroically faced down the men, stated his rescue priorities and threatened the use of his survival knife to gain control of the situation. He established a recovery order based on need and sent six injured victims to the helicopter waiting above, opting to remain on the hotel roof with the armed men as CG-6539 departed to rescue the injured survivors. He continued to establish order and diffuse the situation, assuring everyone they would leave the roof before he did. When CG-6539 returned, Petty Officer WILLIAMS convinced the men to relinquish their weapons and be hoisted aboard the helicopter, greatly reducing tension levels on the roof. He then worked with four other helicopters to evacuate the remaining victims, rescuing over 150 flood victims from the hotel, and was the last one off the roof. Petty Officer WILLIAMS went on to perform 15 other direct deployment rescues that day and 113 in all. Petty Officer WILLIAMS demonstrated remarkable initiative, exceptional fortitude, and daring in spite of imminent personal danger in this rescue. His courage and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.**

