

Human Stories of the U.S. Coast Guard

MICHAEL A. HEALY



Captain Michael A. Healy served as long-time commanding officer of BEAR, the famous Revenue Cutter Service and Coast Guard cutter. He received his commission as third lieutenant from President Abraham Lincoln in March 1865, just a month prior to Lincoln's assassination, becoming the first commissioned African-American officer of the United States government. In 1877, he became the first African American to command a vessel of any kind in the service of the United States.

William H. Thiesen
Atlantic Area Historian
United States Coast Guard