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Vice Admiral Thomas Sargent III Gold Medal 2012

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For heroic actions and service as specified in the following citation where Chief Aviation Survival Technician Randall Rice of Air Station Cape Cod is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on 10 May 2011 while serving as rescue swimmer aboard Coast Guard helicopter, CG6004. CG6004 was launched from Air Station Cape Cod in response to a distress call received from the 45-foot sailing vessel EVA, located 150 nautical miles southeast of Cape Cod. Pounding seas and gale force winds had ripped the mast off the vessel and shattered the windows endangering the lives of the crew. Sails, lines, and debris littered the deck and water surrounding the disabled vessel. A concurrently launched HU-25 aircraft relayed an updated position seven miles from the original reported position while CG6004 was enroute. Upon arriving on scene, the crew of CG6004 was initially unable to visually locate the S/V EVA due to the tossing seas and low ceilings. Unable to establish communications with S/V EVA, the aircraft began to orbit when Chief Warrant Officer RICE spotted the S/V EVA and vectored the pilot into position. The aircraft commander initially made the decision not to deploy the rescue swimmer due to numerous hazards in the water. With CG6004 unable to communicate with the S/V EVA and gain the survivor's assistance, the crew of CG6004 quickly reassessed the risks and determined rescue swimmer deployment was required. Chief Warrant Officer RICE then deployed into the water and maneuvered his way to the S/V EVA braving towering 30-foot swells and debris. He quickly cleared the vessel of the debris and hazards while preparing for two basket hoists of the injured crew. Chief Warrant Officer RICE then re-entered the water for recovery by CG6004. He meticulously executed each lifesaving hoist from the deck of the S/V EVA as the pounding waves and raging winds battered the vessel. His swift actions were instrumental in the saving of two lives. Chief Warrant Officer RICE's courage, judgment, and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard. The Association for Rescue at Sea Vice Admiral Thomas Sargent III Gold Medal is authorized.

AFRAS is a 501(c)3 charity and is registered in the State of New York