

AKANA, Paul Howard, Seaman, USCG

Date of Action: 11 June 1967

Date of Award: 28 March 1968

For heroism on the morning of 11 June 1967, while serving as a volunteer swimmer from the Coast Guard Loran Station, Hawaii, engaged in the rescue of three survivors from a downed Cessna 172 which had crashed in the ocean approximately 500 yards off Upolu Point, Hawaii. The victims, two men and two women, although injured, had managed to climb out of the plane which sank immediately in 80 feet of water. When advised of the ditching and location of the plane, Seaman AKANA and four teammates dived into the choppy, shark-infested waters and swam out to rescue the survivors. When the four occupants of the plane were located, one was unconscious, one was bleeding profusely from a head wound, and two other persons were in apparent shock. The rescuers then began assisting the survivors back to shore where they were treated by Coast Guard personnel. Despite Seaman AKANA's valiant efforts in immediately rendering mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to the unconscious victim, the man succumbed to his injuries. Seaman AKANA demonstrated initiative, fortitude and daring in spite of imminent personal danger during the entire rescue mission. His unselfish actions, courage, and unwavering devotion to duty reflect the highest credit upon himself and the United States Coast Guard.