



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AIRMAN'S MEDAL

TO

STAFF SERGEANT JAMES SOUZA

Staff Sergeant James Souza distinguished himself by heroism involving voluntary risk of life in the Pacific Ocean from 24 to 27 November 1965. During this period, he parachuted into shark-infested and turbulent waters 550 miles southwest of Honolulu, Hawaii, to render medical assistance to a Japanese fisherman who had been bitten by a shark. He parachuted from an HC-97 aircraft voluntarily after several wind drift markers had been mistakenly picked up by the ship's crew. He skillfully maneuvered his parachute so as to land very near the ship, after which he rendered immediate first aid and blood plasma to the victim. After remaining at the injured man's side constantly for 36 hours, Sergeant Souza assisted in evacuating the patient in a small boat through high seas to a US Coast Guard cutter. There he assisted the doctor aboard in keeping the patient alive. The injured man subsequently recovered. By his courageous action and humanitarian regard for his fellow man, Sergeant Souza has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

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