



U.S. Department of Justice

**Stephen J. Murphy
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Eastern District of Michigan**

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For Immediate Release:

Contact: Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758

Sep 5, 2007

EVENT: Complaint

Defendant: Rula Nadim Al Aouar, M.D.

DEARBORN HEIGHTS PHYSICIAN ARRESTED FOR NATURALIZATION FRAUD

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced that Rula Nadim Al Aouar, M.D., 36, of Dearborn Heights, Michigan was arrested earlier today on a previously sealed Criminal Complaint charging her with Naturalization Fraud, or, unlawfully procuring her United States citizenship through fraud and false statements. Dr. Al Aouar was released in federal court in Detroit today on an unsecured bond; a preliminary examination was scheduled for September 25, 2007.

United States Attorney Murphy said, "Our Office continues to vigorously and systematically pursue those who have obtained their U.S. citizenship unlawfully. The notion that an immigrant can rest easy once he or she receives citizenship papers under false pretenses is a false assumption indeed," Mr. Murphy emphasized.

The Complaint alleges that Dr. Al Aouar, a Lebanese national, unlawfully and fraudulently procured her United States citizenship by offering cash to a U.S. citizen to engage in a marriage fraud with her in 1992, and then engaging in numerous acts of perjury, false representations and forgery in furtherance of the fraud. Additionally, Al Aouar allegedly sought asylum by claiming to have been persecuted by the Lebanese foreign terrorist organization,

Hizballah. After committing a series of alleged fraudulent criminal acts unbeknownst to U.S. immigration authorities, Dr. Al Aouar ultimately obtained U.S. citizenship in 2000.

The Naturalization Fraud charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine together with automatic de-naturalization upon conviction.

A Complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. Trial cannot be held on felony charges in a complaint. Only a federal grand jury can return a felony indictment. In the event of an indictment, every defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

In announcing the arrest, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy commended the work of the Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who conducted the investigation, as well as the Special Agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Diplomatic Security Service, U.S. Department of State who assisted in the investigation. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Kenneth R. Chadwell.



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Sep 10, 2007

EVENT: Corporate Security - Law Enforcement Roundtable

**U.S. ATTORNEY MURPHY ANNOUNCES IMPORTANT NEW
INITIATIVE WITH PRIVATE SECTOR
AT CORPORATE ANTI-TERRORISM CONFERENCE**

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today the formation of a private sector-government initiative to enhance cooperation in preventing terrorist attacks. Murphy announced the formation of a new "Corporate Security - Government Law Enforcement Roundtable" as approximately 150 corporate security managers and legal professionals from throughout southeast Michigan were on hand to attend a "first of its kind" corporate anti-terrorism conference at the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center today. Along with General Motors Corporation, the U.S. Attorney's Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council of the Eastern District of Michigan organized the conference to emphasize the important role private industry plays in preventing terrorist attacks, export violations to hostile nations and other threats to the national security.

"Terrorists look for chinks in our armor," said United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy, "But close cooperation and coordination between the government and the private sector seals off those chinks. Fostering an active, productive partnership with the private sector is crucial to protecting our national security, and that is why we are not only sponsoring today's Corporate

Anti-Terrorism Conference, but we are kicking off a new initiative, a Corporate Security - Government Law Enforcement Roundtable, that will look for new and effective ways for the government and the private sector to cooperate in protecting the people of our district. This initiative seeks to forge a strategic alliance between law enforcement and the private sector to identify and eliminate vulnerabilities and to increase our ability to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks.”

Heading up the roster of important speakers was former U.S. Deputy Attorney General Paul J. McNulty, who gave the key-note address. McNulty is now a partner at the law firm of Baker & McKenzie in Washington, D.C.

Also speaking were Richard Fenton, Vice President of Corporate Security for Ilitch Holdings; Gordon Kettler, Executive Director of Global Security for General Motors; Rod Kinghorn, Director of Global Investigations for General Motors; William Kowalski, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, FBI-Detroit; R. Daryl Lundy, Director of Homeland Security for the City of Detroit; Scott Marrah, Partner, Kilpatrick, Stockton, Atlanta, Ga., and Emad (AI) Shenouda, Protective Security Advisor, U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Marrah, a former federal prosecutor for the Southern District of New York, highlighted the role private sector security managers can play to reduce threats to national security, such as the export of dual use technologies and the use of profits from the sale of counterfeit goods to finance terrorist groups.

U.S. Attorney Murphy emphasized that today’s conference was intended to lay the foundation for future information sharing and strategic development between corporate security experts and federal law enforcement in the region.

The United States Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Michigan, the fourteenth largest such office in America, prosecutes civil and criminal matters on behalf of the United States of America and its agencies in the 34 counties that make up the eastern half of the state. The office serves a population of more than 6.7 million Michigan residents and is comprised of approximately 100 Assistant United States Attorneys and a similar number of support staff. The Office has an active and experienced National Security Unit consisting of

nine Assistant United States Attorneys with almost 150 collective years of experience. Lawyers in that Unit organize and run the district's Anti Terrorism Advisory Committee, which is chaired by United States Attorney Murphy.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy was appointed by President Bush to his position on March 8, 2005, and confirmed by unanimous consent of the United States Senate three months later. In his two and one half years of service, US Attorney Murphy has compiled a substantial record of both criminal prosecution and appropriate public awareness and outreach in the area of national security. Involving local citizens and business organizations in those efforts has been an important element of his strategy.

Inquiries or interview requests may be lodged with Public Information Officer Gina Balaya, 313.226.9758



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Sep 10, 2007

EVENT: Conviction

Defendant: Lee Henry Berry

**BAY CITY MAN CONVICTED
ON FEDERAL NARCOTICS CHARGES**

A 61-year-old man who resided in Saginaw and Bay City was found guilty today by a federal jury in Bay City on charges of possession of crack cocaine and cocaine with the intent to distribute and possession of a firearm following a felony conviction, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Found guilty was Lee Henry Berry.

The jury deliberated for approximately two hours before returning the verdicts, concluding a seven-day trial before United States District Judge Thomas Ludington.

The evidence presented at trial showed that Berry was trafficking in crack cocaine and cocaine in the Saginaw and Bay City areas during 2002 through 2005 and that he was in possession of three handguns when a residence was raided in April of 2005. The indictment arose out of an investigation by law enforcement officers with the Bay City Police Department

VIPER Unit and the Bay Area Narcotics Enforcement Team.

Murphy commended the work of the agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration as well as state and local officers assigned to the Bay City Police Department VIPER Unit and the Bay Area Narcotics Enforcement Team (BAYANET).

Sentencing has been scheduled for December 20, 2007, at 2:30 P.M. Berry has at least nine prior state and federal felony convictions, three of which are for felony drug offenses. As a result of these prior convictions he is considered a Career Offender as well as an Armed Career Criminal under federal law and will be sentenced pursuant to the federal sentencing guidelines. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Hluchaniuk.



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Sep 12, 2007

EVENT: Directors Award

**DETROIT U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE WINS
FIVE NATIONAL AWARDS FROM DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today that an unprecedented number of Detroit Assistant US Attorneys – five in total – have been honored by the Department of Justice with prestigious “Director’s Awards” for achievements in their cases and other matters.

Kenneth Melson, the Director of the Executive Office for United States Attorneys in Washington, D.C., officially notified United States Attorney Murphy that the following five AUSAs from the Eastern District of Michigan have won Director’s Awards:

Ken Chadwell, a seventeen-year office veteran, and a member of the district’s National Security Unit. AUSA Chadwell graduated with honors from Wayne State Law School in 1986 where he edited the law review. He previously clerked for a federal district judge in Bay City and worked for a major corporate law firm in Detroit.

John Engstrom, Deputy Chief of the office’s Special Prosecutions Unit and a nineteen year veteran of the office. AUSA Engstrom graduated with honors from Wayne State Law School in 1985, where he as well edited the law review. Engstrom previously clerked for a

judge on the district's federal court and on the 6th U.S. circuit court of appeals, and he worked for another major corporate law firm in Detroit.

Kathy McCarthy, Chief of the district's Controlled Substances Unit, has been working in the office since 1995. A 1988 honors graduate of Wayne State Law School, AUSA McCarthy spent the first seven years of her career as an assistant county prosecutor in Michigan, and she has served in both the Civil and the Criminal Divisions of the office.

Leslie Matuja Wizner has served in the Affirmative Litigation Unit of the office's Civil Division since 2002. A 1987 graduate of the Vanderbilt School of Law, AUSA Wizner practiced in a large corporate Chicago law firm and served as corporate counsel for a major health care system based in Detroit.

Mike Wicks, a thirty-two year veteran of the office, has served as the Chief of the Civil Division since 1984. AUSA Wicks graduated with honors from the University of Michigan School of Law in 1974, and he started with the office as a student clerk between his second and third years of law school.

Details about the awards can be found below.

United States Attorney Murphy stated, "Although these are *individual* achievements by excellent attorneys of which they can be justifiably proud, when we take cases from start to finish, we do so with the support and contributions of many, both in our office and in the other federal agencies. Legal assistants, paralegals, colleagues in the office, our IT people, our admin people, our lit support people, our student workers, our law clerks and our supervisors all contribute vitally to the excellent results we are able to obtain. So these awards are actually something of which our entire office can be proud. They are reflective of the extra effort, positive attitude, professional demeanor, and commitment to excellence and service that our employees bring to work every day. The hard work of all of these people makes our nation safer and our system of justice stronger."

The winners will receive their awards on October 19, 2007, at a ceremony hosted by the Attorney General of the United States in Washington, D.C.

The United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan, the fourteenth largest such office in America, prosecutes civil and criminal matters on behalf of the United States of America and its agencies in the 34 counties that make up the eastern half of the state. The office serves a population of more than 6.7 million Michigan residents and is comprised of approximately 100 Assistant United States Attorneys and a similar number of support staff.

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Details of the Director's Awards:

Superior Performance as an Assistant United States Attorney

AUSAs John C. Engstrom and Kathryn A. McCarthy were awarded with Superior Performance as an Assistant United States Attorney for the highly successful investigation and prosecution of a complex public corruption scheme involving 19 defendants, including public school officials, building contractors, vendors, and other public officials, for millions of dollars in bogus construction contracts and other services in Macomb County.

Superior Performance as an Assistant United States Attorney

AUSA Leslie Wizner was awarded with Superior Performance as an Assistant United States Attorney for her outstanding work in obtaining the highest fraud settlement in the history of the Federal Housing Authority, \$41 million, from the ABN-AMRO Mortgage Group, as a result of her painstakingly detailed investigation and analysis of hundreds of FHA-insured mortgages, which were discovered to contain false certifications of underwriting, and her determined and creative negotiating skills, involving not only ABN-AMRO but several other parties with complex and differing interests, resulting in a national record-setting False Claims Act settlement with a National Mortgage Group.

Superior Performance in Terrorism Prevention and National Security Protection

AUSA Kenneth Chadwell won an award for his exceptional contributions to protecting the Nation's security and preventing another terrorist attack through the development of innovative and unique prosecution tools. Mr. Chadwell conceived, organized and implemented a multi-agency task force dedicated to the permanent removal of alien terrorists from the United States. The task force is the only one of its kind in the nation, and is a model of inter-agency cooperation and force multiplying concepts to maximize anti-terrorism resources.

Executive Achievement Award

AUSA Michael Wicks was recognized for his exceptional career in service to the Department for more than 30 years as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and 23 years as Chief of the Civil Division for the U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Michigan. Mr. Wicks is without parallel as an exemplary leadership and trusted manager of the Civil Division, which, under his oversight, has expanded greatly in size, complexity and variety of operations during his tenure. Mr. Wicks will retire from Government service at the end of 2007, and will leave behind an extremely effective, well-run, and efficient Civil Division operating at its fullest potential and with exceedingly high morale.



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Sep 13, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Dorian Merriewether

FORMER WAYNE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPUTY PLEADS GUILTY

A former Wayne County Sheriff's Deputy, Dorian Merriewether, 36 of Farmington Hills, Michigan pleaded guilty today on charges of distribution of cocaine and marijuana, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Andrew G. Arena, Federal Bureau of Investigation and Wayne County Sheriff Warren C. Evans, whose agency played a central collaborative role in the investigation.

The information presented to the court at the time of the plea established that between December 2004 and February 2005, Merriewether used his position as a Wayne County Sheriff's Deputy to transport and distribute cocaine and marijuana to individuals detained in the Wayne County Jail.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "A deputy Sheriff who is sworn to uphold the law cannot be permitted to violate that law. This office will vigorously investigate and pursue any allegations of public corruption, especially those involving police officers who are sworn to uphold the law."

Merriewether is scheduled to be sentenced on November 15, 2007. Merriewether faces

a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for his crimes.

The case was investigated by special agents of the FBI as well as the internal affairs department of the Wayne County Sheriff's Office.



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Contact: Susan Plochinski, USAO, 313-226-9193
Stephen Moore, IRS, 313-234-2410

Sep 13, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Thomas L. Mercer

**FORMER H&R BLOCK TAX PREPARER
PLEADS GUILTY TO FRAUD AND OBSTRUCTION**

A tax preparer formerly employed by H&R Block pleaded guilty today to 23 counts of preparing false tax returns to generate large fraudulent tax refunds for his clients and to 7 counts of obstructing the Internal Revenue Service's investigation of his conduct, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the IRS's Criminal Investigation Division.

Thomas L. Mercer, 59, a resident of Romulus, entered the guilty pleas before U.S. District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff. At the plea hearing, Mercer admitted that he prepared and electronically filed 23 federal income tax returns for his clients that contained false deductions for business losses, unreimbursed employee expenses, charitable contributions, and college tuition and fees and false claims for tax credits. As a result, his clients received large tax refunds from the IRS to which they were not entitled. The clients then split the refunds with Mercer. Mercer also admitted that after he became aware that the IRS was investigating the

returns he prepared, he sent instructions to some of his clients about what to tell investigators and provided them with documents purporting to justify some of the business expenses appearing on their tax returns.

The IRS is seeking repayment of the excess refunds from Mercer's clients through administrative proceedings.

Mercer was employed as a tax preparer at the office of H&R Block at Telegraph Road and Michigan Avenue in Dearborn, Michigan, from November 2002 to March 2005, when he was terminated for the conduct that led to these criminal charges. Thereafter, Mercer continued his scheme under the name "Mercer's Tax Service."

"This case clearly demonstrates my office's commitment to aggressively prosecute tax fraud. I commend the vigilance of the IRS in detecting this type of crime. We will take all appropriate actions against those who prepare fraudulent tax returns." United States Attorney Murphy said

"No one is entitled to an undeserved windfall and refunds should only be issued to taxpayers who are entitled to them," said Aouate. "Willfully filing a false tax return is the same as stealing. At the IRS, protecting taxpayer money is a matter we take extremely seriously."

There is no plea agreement. Each count to which Mercer pleaded guilty carries a maximum penalty of 3 years' imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Mercer could also be ordered to pay restitution to the IRS in the sum of the fraudulently generated refunds, which is about \$330,000. Mercer is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Zatkoff on November 29, 2007. The government anticipates that Mercer's imprisonment range under the federal Sentencing Guidelines will be six to seven years.

Mr. Murphy noted that H&R Block fully cooperated with and provided valuable assistance to the government's criminal investigation, which was conducted by the Criminal Investigation Division of the IRS. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephen Hiyama.



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Sep 14, 2007

EVENT: Indictment

Defendant: Daniel Saab

FORMER DEARBORN POLICE OFFICER INDICTED

A former Dearborn Police officer was arraigned in United States District Court today on an indictment by a federal grand jury in Detroit on charges of producing a false police report and tampering with witnesses and evidence, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Daniel Saab, 38, of Dearborn, Michigan, was arraigned on one count of witness tampering and one count of tampering with evidence.

The indictment charged that Saab, while employed as a corporal with the City of Dearborn Police Department, knowingly made a false police report and attempted to influence a witness by having the witness falsely corroborate the false police report at a supervised release violation hearing that was scheduled in federal court on June 20, 2007. Saab also attempted to have the witness manufacture or obtain false documents to present as evidence at the hearing.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Today's charges involve conduct by a police officer who allegedly tampered with the evidence and attempted to undermine the

integrity of the federal judicial system. Whenever a law enforcement official is involved in a crime, a crucial bond of trust is broken and the safety of the entire community is put at risk. I would like to thank the Dearborn Police Department for bringing this conduct to light and assisting the federal authorities in this investigation.”

Under the statute Saab faces up to 20 years' imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Mr. Murphy commended the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their investigation, and the Dearborn Police Department, for bringing the allegations to the attention of the government and for their cooperation and assistance which led to this indictment.



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Sep 19, 2007

EVENT: Sentencing

Defendant: David Gerald Blake

St. Clair Man Sentenced to Three Months Home Detention

DETROIT - David Gerald Blake, of St. Clair Shores, Michigan, was sentenced on September 18, 2007 to two years of probation, three months home detention with electronic monitoring and a \$2,000 fine for operating a recreational vessel on Lake St. Clair in a grossly negligent manner. At the sentencing hearing, U. S. District Judge Patrick J. Duggan also ordered Mr. Blake to complete a U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary boater safety course prior to operating any pleasure craft. Blake pleaded guilty to this offense on May 17, 2007.

According to court documents, on August 24, 2005, Mr. Blake was operating a high performance pleasure craft and nearly collided with a smaller Coast Guard vessel assigned to Coast Guard Station St. Clair Shores. Mr. Blake was traveling at a high rate of speed, at night, without a proper lookout and in an area congested with sailing vessels. He was also operating his vessel while impaired by alcohol. An attentive lookout on the Coast Guard vessel alerted the vessel's coxswain in time for the coxswain to take evasive action to avoid a collision. The Coast Guard eventually caught up with Mr. Blake to conduct a boarding. When the Coast Guard pulled alongside Blake he refused to comply with instructions, was verbally abusive to

the Coast Guard crew and maneuvered his vessel to prevent the Coast Guard from conducting a boarding. The boarding officers eventually were able to board Mr. Blake's vessel. Mr. Blake was arrested by special agents of the Coast Guard Investigative Service once brought ashore by the Coast Guard boarding officer

U. S. Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Our office is committed to protecting the public from the dangers of unruly and intoxicated boaters. Boaters who mix drinking and intoxication with transportation on our district's waterways risk collision with one of the many sailing vessels or even a Coast Guard boat that might be sailing nearby. Aggressive prosecution of these types of cases, we hope, will help avoid results that might have been tragic."

According to Captain Patrick Brennan., Commander, Coast Guard Sector Detroit, since Mr. Blake's arrest, Congress has passed new legislation, which imposes stiff sanctions on boat masters or operators who fail to slow or stop their vessel, obstruct or impede a boarding or providing false information to a Federal law enforcement officer during a boarding of a vessel. A master or operator who violates this new law may be imprisoned for not more than 5 years, fined \$250,000 or both. "In most cases boaters stop when signaled and comply with directions given to them by Coast Guard boarding officers. However, boaters who fail to stop or who are operating their vessels while impaired by alcohol place themselves, their passengers, the public and the Coast Guard at great risk. Alcohol use is ranked as one of the top ten contributing factors in all boating accidents."

The case was investigated by the Coast Guard Investigative Service Central Region and prosecuted by Special Assistant U. S. Attorney Larry Kennedy



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Sep 18, 2007

EVENT: Sentencing

Defendant: Radwan Almadrahi

**DEARBORN CONSPIRATORS SENTENCED FOLLOWING THEIR
UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO BRIBE A JUROR IN A FEDERAL TRIAL**

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy and Andrew C. Arena, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced today that the third and final member of the conspiracy who tried unsuccessfully to bribe a juror in November 2004 was sentenced on Monday, September 17, 2007 by the Honorable Gerald E. Rosen.

On February 28, 2007, Ahmad Musa Jebriil, age 36, the mastermind of the conspiracy, was sentenced to serve 77 months in custody, to be followed by 2 years supervised release. Thirty months of Jebriil's sentence will run consecutive to the 70-month sentence that was imposed following his earlier conviction, for a total period of incarceration of 100 months.

On June 18, 2007, Musa Fawzi Odeh, age 22, the nephew of Ahmad Jebriil, was sentenced to serve 12 months and one day, to be followed by 2 years supervised release.

On September 17, 2007, Radwan Almadrahi, age 25, a student of Ahmad Jebriil's lectures since he was a teenager in 2001, was sentenced to 3 years probation, the first 120

days to be served on home confinement.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Trial by jury is a keystone in our criminal justice system that depends on the impartiality and fairness of the citizens who serve as jurors. Any effort to persuade a juror to compromise the jury process, or even to contact a sitting juror regarding the exercise of her sworn duty, is a serious matter that undermines the promise of fairness and due process."

According to the information presented to the court at the time of the three conspirators' pleas, in November 2004, Ahmad Jebril and his father, Musa Jebril, were on trial before Judge Rosen on a 42-count indictment charging them with conspiracy, bank fraud, mail fraud, wire fraud, Social Security fraud, money laundering, failure to file income tax returns, and being felons in possession of firearms and ammunition. During jury selection in that case, Ahmad Jebril targeted the female juror seated as Juror Nine, and recruited his nephew Musa Odeh, his student Radwan Almadrahi, and others to approach Juror Nine at her place of business and attempt to persuade her to find the Jebrils not guilty. Almadrahi and Odeh did locate Juror Nine; they spoke with her fiancé and offered to pay for their wedding and buy them a house if she could cause the jury to acquit the Jebrils.

Instead, Juror Nine immediately came forward to Judge Rosen and reported the unlawful conduct. Judge Rosen excused her from jury service; the remaining jurors were told only that Juror Nine had been released from jury duty for personal reasons. The trial proceeded to its conclusion, and Ahmad Jebril and Musa Jebril were convicted of all 42 counts.

The results of the FBI investigation of the attempts to bribe the juror were presented to a federal grand jury, and indictments were returned in February 2006. The three defendants pleaded guilty in December 2006.



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Dawn Clenney - FBI (313) 237-4206
Stephen Moore - IRS (313) 234-2410

Sep 18, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Samuel J. Abraham

**BLOOMFIELD HILLS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CHARGES OF
TAX EVASION AND ADVANCE FEE SCHEMES ON NON-EXISTENT
HIGH DOLLAR LOANS**

On September 18, 2007, Samuel J. Abraham, a 51-year-old Bloomfield Hills man pled guilty to three counts of tax evasion, two counts of wire fraud, and two counts of engaging in monetary transactions in criminally derived property, before U.S. District Court Judge Denise Page Hood announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy. The plea agreement also provided for defendant's forfeiture of at least \$3,150,000 and other assets, including a 1996 Mercedes Benz and a 2005 Cadillac Escalade.

Information presented to the court at the time of the guilty plea showed that during 2003 & 2004, Sam Abraham, doing business as the Walton Trust Ltd., was introduced to representatives of European Sea's Ltd., an Irish company, and Hallonlodge Proprietary Ltd., an Australian company, who were seeking a large credit facility for their business projects. Abraham falsely represented to them that he could secure \$10 million and \$100 million for their

respective projects, in exchange for fees of \$150,000 from European Sea's Ltd. and \$3 million from Hallonlodge. Abraham executed agreements indicating that Walton Trust would arrange for the loans from a major bank. European Sea's and Hallonlodge wired their funding fees to "escrow" accounts located at Comerica and JP Morgan Chase Bank in Michigan. These "escrow" accounts were set up to provide the investors with comfort. The representatives of both European Sea's and Hallonlodge understood that their funding fees would not be touched until the investment contract and original "funding bank letter" indicated that the pool of bank funds were available.

Abraham then provided the European Sea's and Hallonlodge representatives with counterfeit letters from officials in the Private Banking Division and Global Banking Department of Citibank, New York, confirming the availability of the \$10 million and \$100 million lines of credit. However, Abraham, without the knowledge or permission of European Sea's or Hallonlodge's representatives, instructed his attorney to commence disbursing the \$150,000 and \$3 million fees to himself and others for his own personal use, knowing that there were no monies available at Citibank for either European Sea's or Hallonlodge. Abraham attempted to lull the investors into believing that the monies would eventually come but the bank loan, line of credit, or investment returns never materialized.

The joint federal agencies' investigation also disclosed that since 1998 Abraham has obtained several million more dollars through his advance fee and investment schemes. For the 2000 through 2002 tax years, Abraham failed to file tax returns in spite of his substantial income from his investment fees. Abraham also acknowledged making false statements to the Internal Revenue Service in evading payment of his income tax liabilities.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy stated, "Advance fee loan schemes such as this are all too common because persuasive con artists can deceive even sophisticated business people. Although federal law enforcement is well equipped to pursue such cases, investors need to be on their guard against these schemes as the first line of defense."

"Today's swindlers still target the unsuspecting with offers that are too good to be true, but, in today's competitive business world, these scam artists are using sophisticated marketing methods and false documentation to seal the deal," said Aouate. "IRS Criminal

Investigation will continue to diligently follow the money in order to bring these greedy people to justice.”

A sentencing date of March 5, 2008 has been set by Judge Hood. A \$50,000 unsecured bond was continued for Abraham, who has also been ordered not to solicit funds from any investors.

The investigation leading up to the indictment was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigations Division and the United States Postal Inspection Service. The case has been prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Ross I. MacKenzie and Julie Beck.



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Greg Palmore - ICE (313) 226-0500

Sep 18, 2007

EVENT: Sentencing

Defendant: Shahin Judeh et al

**CHICAGO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO IMPORTING MILLIONS
OF PSEUDOEPHEDRINE PILLS IN "CRYSTAL METH" CONSPIRACY**

A 36-year-old Chicago resident extradited from Brazil in 2005 pleaded guilty to conspiring to distribute and import into the United States millions of tablets of pseudoephedrine, through the metropolitan Detroit area, knowing that those pills would be used to manufacture "crystal meth," a controlled substance, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Brian Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Detroit.

Pleading guilty before U.S. District Judge Gerald E. Rosen was Shahin Judeh.

The information presented to the court at the time of the plea revealed that between November 2002 and May 2003, Shahin Judeh, Ali Salem and several co-conspirators paid hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash to co-conspirators in Montreal, Canada to acquire over ten million pills of pseudoephedrine, and engaged in significant efforts to smuggle the pills

into the United States across the Windsor-Detroit border and then transport them to western locations in the United States for use in the manufacture of methamphetamine. The plans of the conspiracy were revealed and thwarted through the use of undercover ICE agents posing as corrupt truck drivers, and through the cooperative investigative efforts of ICE, the Drug Enforcement Administration and Canadian Law Enforcement Authorities.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "The guilty plea is an example of how international cooperation can thwart high volume purveyors of the precursor drugs used to make 'crystal meth.' I commend the excellent work of the ICE, DEA and our Canadian partners."

Special Agent in Charge Brian Moskowitz said, "The conviction of Judeh serves a crippling blow to an organization that conspired to smuggle 10 million tablets of pseudoephedrine into the United States. When manufactured into methamphetamine, this pseudoephedrine represented more than 1,840 kilograms of methamphetamine with an estimated street value in excess of \$36,000,000.00." "The seizure of 10 million tablets of pseudoephedrine will have a dramatic impact on the availability of methamphetamine on the streets of our cities."

Under the terms of his plea agreement, Judeh faces a guideline sentencing range of 235 to 240 months in prison. His sentencing date has been scheduled for December 17, 2007. Co-Defendants Ali Salem, Mohammad Awad and Enrique Sanchez (also known as Enrique Barajas) each pleaded guilty to identical charges earlier this year and are all awaiting sentencing. Sanchez was also extradited from abroad (Canada) for prosecution on these charges.

The investigation of this case was conducted by agents of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Drug Enforcement Administration, with the assistance of Canadian Law Enforcement Authorities. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Carl Gilmer-Hill and Special Assistant United States Attorney Joe Allen.



U.S. Department of Justice

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Sep 20, 2007

EVENT: Sentencing

Defendant: Alonzo Bates

**FORMER DETROIT CITY COUNCILMAN SENTENCED
ON THEFT AND FRAUD CHARGES**

Former Detroit City Councilman Alonzo Bates, 65, of Detroit, was sentenced today to 33 months' imprisonment as a result of having been convicted of four felony counts of theft from the City of Detroit and one count of bank fraud, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent In Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Maurice Aouate, Special Agent In Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigations Division.

Bates was also ordered to pay more than \$90,000 in restitution to the City of Detroit, a \$10,000 fine, and \$36,000 to the Internal Revenue Service. The sentence was imposed by U.S. District Judge Victoria A. Roberts.

The evidence presented at trial established that between 2002 and 2004 Bates placed

ghost employees on the City's payroll. The ghost employees included Britni Barber, the daughter of Bates' girlfriend; Melvin Cartwright, the defendant's brother-in-law, and Veronda Arnold, the mother of one of defendants' children. Bates also placed Jollan Johnson on the City's payroll who cut his lawn and did odd jobs at his home and rental property. The theft involved over \$91,000 in unearned wages.

Bates was also found guilty of bank fraud based on the fact that, after Jollan Johnson left Michigan for Alabama in February of 2004, the defendant cashed ten additional payroll checks in the name of Jollan Johnson by forging or causing others to forge Johnson's signature without Johnson's knowledge or consent.

Bates pleaded guilty on the eve of the trial to charges that he failed to file federal tax returns for tax years 2001 through 2004, as he was required to do under federal law.

"Today's sentence evidences our success in carrying out successful prosecutions against corrupt public officials. Public officials who use taxpayer funds for their own personal benefit or gain will be prosecuted by my office to the fullest extent of the law. I congratulate Assistant United States Attorney Michael Bullotta, the FBI, the IRS, and their entire trial team for a job very well done," said United States Attorney Murphy.

"Public officials must comply with the same tax obligations as the citizens they were elected to serve," said Aouate, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation. "No one is above the law."

The investigation of this case was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigations Division and the Detroit Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney R. Michael Bullotta.



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Sep 20, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Dr. Alex Zakharia

**MIAMI SURGEON PLEADS GUILTY
TO CONTEMPT BASED ON FALSE TESTIMONY**

Dr. Alex Zakharia, 69, a cardiovascular surgeon licensed in Florida and practicing in the Miami area, pled guilty to a contempt of court, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Daniel D. Roberts, FBI Special Agent in Charge.

Dr. Zakharia pled guilty before Hon. Paul Borman, United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan. He admitted that in 2002 he had testified as an expert witness on behalf of the plaintiff in a lawsuit charging a doctor at the Veterans Administration hospital in Ann Arbor with medical malpractice in connection with a coronary artery bypass graft. He also admitted that during the deposition, he falsely bolstered his credibility as an expert by creating the impression that he was the lead surgeon for numerous coronary artery bypass grafts over the preceding several years, when in fact he had done no such surgeries. Finally, he admitted that when his having created this false impression came to light, it destroyed his credibility as an expert witness, and thereby obstructed the administration of justice.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Any professional who offers expert testimony must recognize the seriousness of his or her obligation to be candid and accurate. Otherwise the integrity of our judicial system becomes suspect."

Dr. Zakharia pled guilty under a plea agreement. According to the agreement, he faces up to one year in custody, must make restitution to the parties who were affected by his false testimony in this deposition and one other, and will retire from the practice of medicine by the end of the year. The government agreed to dismiss the felony charges pending against him for perjury, mail fraud and wire fraud.

Dr. Zakharia will be sentenced on December 11, 2007.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Detroit, Michigan

**SIX MEMBERS OF "DETROIT THUG LORDZ"
PLEAD GUILTY TO DRUG CHARGES**

Six members and associates of an armed gang in northwest Detroit known as the "Detroit Thug Lordz" or "DTL" entered guilty pleas in federal court today to a variety of felony drug charges, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Joining in the announcement was ATF Special Agent-In-Charge Valerie J. Goddard of the Detroit Field Division. This is a TIDE (Tactical Intelligence Driven Enforcement) investigation, lead by ATF and the Detroit Police Department with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Michigan State Police (MSP).

The following individuals pleaded guilty before Judge David M. Lawson this afternoon:

- Rodolfo Moreno, 20, of Detroit pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana. Moreno's plea agreement requires a ten-year mandatory minimum sentence of imprisonment and a sentencing range of 262-327 months.
- Nicholas Jaime, a/k/a Kilo, 21, of Detroit pleaded guilty to distributing more than five grams of crack cocaine. Jaime's plea agreement calls for a five-year mandatory minimum and a sentencing range of 87-108 months.
- Hassan Aljibory, 23, of Warren, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana. Aljibory's plea agreement carries a ten-year mandatory minimum sentence and a sentencing range of 46-57 months.
- Randi Carl Diggs, 19, of Detroit pleaded guilty to distributing crack cocaine and marijuana. He faces 24-30 months imprisonment.
- Michael Moreno, 18, of Detroit pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute powder cocaine and marijuana. He faces 12-18 months.

- Shane Aben, 18, of Detroit pleaded guilty to possession of marijuana. He faces 0-6 months imprisonment.

Collectively, the six defendants admitted to distributing crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana throughout northwest Detroit from May 2, 2006 to February 13, 2007. During this period, the organization maintained drug houses on Woodmont, Lawndale, and Winthrop Streets. Drug sales were accomplished through calls to pre-arranged cellular telephone numbers and deliveries with rented vehicles. Sentencing is scheduled for January 13, 2008.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Any organized groups that endanger our neighborhoods by pursuing a gangster's life of drug trafficking and violence should take notice that we are determined to dismantle armed drug gangs and bring them to justice. We will continue our work on these types of priority gang prosecutions."

Special Agent in Charge Valerie Goddard said, "Our focus on gun crime through the Project Safe Neighborhood initiative leads us to dismantle organized drug trafficking organizations like the Detroit Thug Lordz. In the City of Detroit, as with many major metropolitan areas, we know that these small drug organizations fuel violent crime. ATF's strategy is unique and our focus on the gun has proven to be successful in dismantling gangs and providing lengthy Federal prison sentences for repeat and violent offenders."

Three defendants charged in the sixteen-count indictment did not enter guilty pleas today. If convicted following trial, Isaias Quesada, 22, the alleged gang leader, will face a mandatory minimum sentence of 20 years imprisonment. Omar Jay Gladson, 20, and Karen Haskins, 49, will serve mandatory life imprisonment. All three defendants are scheduled for trial later this year.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys David Portelli, Terrence Haugabook, and Leonid Feller.

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Operation TIDE is the unprecedented, long-term law enforcement and community collaboration where federal, state, county and local law enforcement officials meet regularly and work in cooperation to reduce violent crimes and prevent recidivism by focusing on the "worst of the worst" in Northwest Detroit, Detroit's largest police district.

Other PSN Operation TIDE Task Force partners include the U.S. Marshals Service, the FBI, the Wayne County Sheriff's Department, the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, and the Michigan Department of Corrections.

Citizens with information concerning illegal guns, gangs with guns, armed drug trafficking or the trafficking of illegal guns are encouraged to call 800-ATF-GUNS. Callers can remain anonymous. This number is managed and answered by law enforcement, ATF agents who work directly with local police departments. For information about Project Safe Neighborhoods call 1-800-891-8881 or visit www.psnworks.org.



U.S. Department of Justice

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Sep 20, 2007

EVENT: Sentencing

Defendant: Barbara Jean Wallace

Inglewood, California Person Sentenced on September 19, 2007 to 78 Months in Federal Prison for Trafficking in OxyContin and Committing Perjury

Barbara Jean Wallace, a 30-year-old from Inglewood, California, was sentenced on September 19, 2007 to 78 months in federal prison for trafficking in OxyContin and committing perjury, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today. Wallace was sentenced in U.S. District Court by Judge Thomas L. Ludington. Judge Ludington presided over Wallace's first trial, which ended with a hung jury, and her second trial at which she was convicted of both drug offenses and two counts of perjury.

The investigation conducted by the Postal Inspection Service (the investigatory component of the U.S. Postal Service) and the Drug Enforcement Administration revealed that Barbara Wallace and Dameon Baber used the U.S. Mail to send OxyContin pills to Wardell Amos in Saginaw, Michigan. The 80 mg OxyContin pills were hidden in dolls and sent to Amos via Express Mail. Amos sold the OxyContin pills and paid Wallace and Baber by Western Union.

Baber and Amos pled guilty and were sentenced to 36 months and 113 months,

respectively. Wallace opted to go to trial. Her perjurious testimony during her first trial resulted in a hung jury so a mistrial was declared. During the re-trial, the second jury found Wallace guilty of the drug charges and also perjury based on her false testimony during the first trial.

U.S. Attorney Murphy thanked the Postal Inspection Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration for their assistance in the successful investigation and prosecution of the case.



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Sep 25, 2007

EVENT: Settlement

Defendant: City of Eastpointe

**United States's Attorney Stephen J. Murphy Announces Americans
with Disabilities Act Settlement with City of Eastpointe, Michigan**

A settlement has been reached with the City of Eastpointe, Michigan regarding accessibility at its 38th District Court, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy.

The Agreement resolves alleged violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Justice Department initially conducted an investigation after it received a complaint about accessibility at the court house. The investigation concluded that there were over one hundred separate violations of the ADA at the 38th District Court, ranging from accessibility in the parking and entrances areas to seating in the courtroom, listening devices in the courtroom, and the toilet rooms. The City of Eastpointe has worked cooperatively with the Department throughout its investigation to reach this Settlement Agreement.

United States Attorney Murphy said, "Ensuring that courthouses are accessible to individuals with disabilities is critical to ensure that all individuals have the ability to exercise their fundamental rights under the Constitution. This is an example of how federal and local

government can work together to benefit people with disabilities."

The Agreement requires the City of Eastpointe to remedy inaccessible entrances, parking spaces, seating in the court room, holding cell, the jury room, toilet rooms and the judicial bench, among others. The City has agreed to complete the work within six months of today.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the ADA or the agreement can call the Justice Department's toll-free ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301 or 800-514-0383 (TTY), or access its ADA Web site at "<http://www.ada.gov>."