



Department of Justice

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GROUP OF ATLANTA TELEMARKETERS CHARGED WITH SCAM OF ELDERLY VICTIMS

Victims Allegedly Told They Had Won Sweepstakes But First Had To Pay A "Fee"

Atlanta, GA - RODNEY REID, a/k/a "Rodney Reed," 33, of Jonesboro, Georgia; CHARMAINE POWELL, 31, of Lawrenceville, Georgia; STEPHANIE MYRICK, 37, of Lithonia, Georgia; SHAWAN BROWN, 32, of Austell, Georgia; JO L. DAVENPORT, 45, of Smyrna, Georgia; STEVENSON BROOKS, 54, of Covington, Georgia; DWAYNE NEWBY, a/k/a "Dwane Brown," 45, of Austell, Georgia; KEITH DIXON, 26, of Decatur, Georgia; RENITA BOND, 32, of Riverdale, Georgia; ALBERT GRAHAM, a/k/a "Al Graham," 32, of Ellenwood, Georgia; FNU LNU #1, a/k/a "Bob Davis," age and residence unknown; FNU LNU #2, a/k/a "Donald Wright," age and residence unknown, have been charged with conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud, and conspiracy to commit money laundering. REID, MYRICK, BROWN, and NEWBY made their initial appearance today before United States Magistrate Gerrilyn Brill. The remaining defendants are expected to be brought to Magistrate's court for initial appearances later this week. All the defendants were indicted by a federal grand jury on May 1, 2007.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "This is a so-called advance fee scam that unfortunately has been used by fraudsters for many years. Sweepstakes telemarketing scams had been on the decline, but it is clear that there could be victims out there who can still be taken. These defendants allegedly preyed upon the elderly by instilling false hopes of a large cash prize. Many victims were defrauded out of thousands of dollars that they had saved for retirement."

"U.S. Postal Inspectors have protected the sanctity of the nation's mail system for over 200 years. We were persistent in our investigative efforts to bring to justice those responsible for victimizing the elderly in this particular case. The use of the U.S. Mail to defraud the American public will not be tolerated," said Martin D. Phanco, Inspector in Charge, Atlanta Division.

According to Nahmias and the documents and information presented in court:
Between December 2001 and October 2006, FNU LNU #1 (first name unknown and last

name unknown), a/k/a “Bob Davis,” called elderly victims around the U.S. and misrepresented to them that they had won a large sum of money through a sweepstakes. In order to claim the prize, however, victims were told that they had to pay fees in advance for state taxes and other administrative fees. Believing that they had won the grand prize, the victims sent cash through the mail, or through wire transfers, on numerous occasions to the co-defendants as directed. Investigation revealed that the alleged sweepstakes did not exist, and the victims did not receive a refund of monies they had sent.

So far, law enforcement authorities have identified at least nine victims located in Hawaii, Washington, Ohio, Illinois, and Alabama. The money sent by the victims to the defendants totals over \$440,000. Any other members of the public who believe they or their elderly friends or relatives have been contacted by “Bob Davis” during that time are asked to call their local Postal Inspectors office.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment only contains charges. The defendants are presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by Inspectors of the United States Postal Inspection Service.

Assistant United States Attorney Bjay Pak is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.