



Department of Justice

United States Attorney's Office

Northern District of Florida

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FORMER FAMU DIRECTOR SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON

TALLAHASSEE -- Thomas F. Kirwin, Acting United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida, announced today that the former director of the Institute on Urban Policy and Commerce (Institute) at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) was sentenced to 46 months in federal prison based upon her conviction on conspiracy and theft from Federal programs charges.

United States District Judge Richard Smoak, in Panama City, Florida, sentenced Patricia Walker McGill, age 60, of Tallahassee, Florida, to 46 months in federal prison on her convictions on one count of conspiracy to commit theft from Federal programs and seven counts of theft from Federal programs relating to educational grants. The defendant was also ordered to serve a period of three years' supervised release following her release from prison. In sentencing the defendant, the Court found that the defendant exercised a leadership role in the criminal activity and abused her position of trust with respect to the grants. The Court also ordered defendant McGill to pay \$800 in special assessments to the United States and to make restitution in the amount of \$212,461.21 to the Florida Department of Education. McGill was ordered to surrender to commence serving her sentence on December 1, 2008 at 12:00 noon.

Defendant McGill pled guilty to the eight charges on June 18, 2008, after two days of trial, and after a jury had heard testimony from 21 witnesses and received 255 exhibits in evidence. The testimony at trial indicated that McGill stole funds provided by the United States Department of Education through the Florida Department of Education for educational literacy grants provided to FAMU for Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Union and Washington counties. She used these literacy grant monies to pay individuals and entities for goods and services not related to or authorized by the educational grants. She also fraudulently took grant monies from the 21st Century educational grant in Franklin County, claiming these monies as payment for drafting and submitting the grant application, despite being advised that no grant monies could be expended for this purpose. McGill used educational grant monies in Calhoun and Franklin Counties to pay Institute and State of Florida employees for work unrelated to the educational grants, including overtime and bonuses. McGill also required certain educational grant recipients to kick back portions of the grant monies to her and to disguise these monies as "consulting" fees for the grants. McGill also required the grant recipients to falsely report that the grant monies were earned for work related to the grants. To conceal the fraud, McGill caused fraudulent invoices to be submitted to grant recipients.

This successful prosecution is the result of a three year investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Office of Inspector General for the United States Department of Education, and the State of Florida Department of Financial Services. Acting United States Attorney Kirwin commended the tireless efforts of investigators of the agencies involved in this complex investigation. Mr. Kirwin stated that, "the theft of federal program funds by individuals entrusted with the administration and legitimate distribution of those funds is a grave abuse of the public trust and a betrayal of the citizens who depend on these funds. This office, along with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Inspector General for the Department of Education, and the Florida Department of Financial Services, will vigorously investigate and identify those individuals who steal and divert educational grant monies from the intended recipients."

Special Agent In Charge James Casey, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Jacksonville Division, stated, "We would like to express our appreciation for the partnership of the United States Attorney's Office and the United States Department of Education, Office of Inspector General, both of whom, worked tirelessly with us to bring this case to a successful conclusion. The FBI will continue to vigorously pursue investigation of individuals who violate the public trust."

Mr. Jerry Bridges, Acting Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Education, stated, " I want to commend the efforts of our special agents, the FBI, and the U.S. Attorney's Office to hold these individuals accountable for their fraudulent activity. The misappropriation of federal education and literacy dollars by this defendant took vital program funds away from those, who relied on these programs to further their education, and that is unacceptable."

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