



Ex-Program Director Gets Stiff Sentence

A former Georgia Senior Corps program director has been convicted of fraud and embezzlement of more than \$100,000 and faces more than two years in prison thanks to the joint efforts of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and officials of the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation).

Alma Williams, former executive director of the Eastside Training Academy in Valdosta, GA., was found guilty in Federal Court on June 19, 2006, of six counts of Theft of Federal Funds. She was sentenced on September 18, 2006, to 33 months in jail plus three years of probation, fined \$100,536.88 and assessed \$600 in court costs.

Williams, who had received Corporation Senior Corps grants to operate Foster Grandparent and Retired Senior Volunteer Program units, embezzled more than \$100,000 in Federal taxpayer dollars for her personal use and to operate business ventures.

Robert J. Walters, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations, had worked on the case for several years after receiving an anonymous tip via the OIG's Fraud Hotline. He traveled to Valdosta to see justice served and, throughout the weeklong trial, sat at the prosecution table, aiding Assistant U.S. Attorney Jim Crane.

Besides building a strong case and testifying at the trial, Walters helped to prepare prosecution arguments and exhibits and lined up a number of Corporation officials as expert witnesses.

Suzanne Fahy, Executive Director of Senior Corps, explained the Corporation's programs and regulations to the jury. Daryl James, the Corporation's Georgia State Director and Southern Area Manager, recounted his interactions and his concerns with Alma Williams, which led him to shut down her program in 2002. Veda Williams, Director of the Corporation's Southern Service Center, detailed Alma Williams' questionable financial transactions involving Federal funds.

"We appreciate the cooperation and assistance that Corporation officials gave us in this case," said Deputy Inspector General Robert Shadowens. "The OIG's primary mission is to support the Corporation and to work with them, whenever possible, in our efforts to detect and prevent waste, fraud and abuse."