



**U.S. Department of Justice**

**Stephen J. Murphy  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Michigan**

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**For Immediate Release:**

**Contact:** Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758  
Stephen Moore, IRS CI (313) 234-2410

January 28, 2008

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**EVENT: Indictment**

**Defendant: Patricia Anderson**

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**Detroit Return Preparer Arraigned on Charges of Preparing False Returns**

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Patricia Anderson of Detroit, was arraigned on a twenty count indictment charging her with aiding and assisting in the preparation of false and fraudulent tax returns, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice M. Aouate, Special Agent in Charge of IRS Criminal.

Anderson appeared before United States Magistrate Judge Steven D. Pepe and was placed on a \$10,000 unsecured bond.

According to court records, during 2003 and into 2005, Anderson prepared twenty tax returns for numerous clients in which she created false dependents, small business losses, IRA deductions, tuition fees, and false Schedule "A" deductions. The amount of loss to the Internal Revenue Service, associated with these returns, totaled over \$76,000.

United States Attorney Murphy stated that "We take tax enforcement extremely

seriously in this district. Abusive tax return preparers, such as this defendant, will always be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent by my office. This prosecution demonstrates my office's continuing efforts to enforce tax laws that were set up for the good of all and to deter those who would subvert them."

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

Preparing false and fraudulent tax returns carries a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment and a \$100,000 per count.

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.

United States Attorney Murphy thanked IRS Criminal Investigation for their investigation of the case. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Noceeba S. Gordon.



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Carolyn Gibson, DEA (313) 234-4220  
Stephen Moore, IRS, (313) 234-2410

January 30, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentencing**

**Defendant: Raheel "Ray" Shiekh**

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**Hamtramck Businessman Sentenced on Money Laundering Charge**

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Raheel "Ray" Shiekh, 45, of Warren, was sentenced today to 2 years in prison as a result of his guilty plea on money laundering charges, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Robert Corso, United States Drug Enforcement Administration and Special Agent in Charge Maurice Aouate, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation.

According to court records, during 2004 and 2005, Sheikh agreed to assist the Quasand Lewis drug organization in the purchase of several buildings in Detroit and elsewhere. Shiekh took delivery of over \$1.2 million in currency, and using family members and friends, converted the cash to cashiers checks. These cashiers checks where used to purchase the "West Park" Apartments, in Detroit and other buildings in Highland Park, Michigan, Clarkson, Georgia, and Pembroke Pines, Florida. All the properties where purchased in nominee names to conceal and disguise the nature and ownership of the illegal proceeds. Shiekh received a commission

of \$25,000 from the Lewis drug organization.

Lewis was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment for his role in illegal drug trafficking after admitting that he organized the distribution of more than 10,000 kilograms of marijuana here in the Detroit area.

“Our office priorities include the tracing of drug profits and the return of money laundering charges in those cases where we can hit drug dealers where it hurts them the most: in their bank accounts. This latest sentence reflects dedication and tireless effort of an entire law enforcement team who worked together so hard to effectively bring down the Lewis drug organization,” United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said. “We continue to monitor this sort of criminal behavior and prosecute it as aggressively as possible where warranted.”

Special Agent in Charge Corso stated, “Mr. Shiekh’s sentencing highlights the significant role money laundering played to support the drug trafficking of this organization. DEA and our law enforcement partners will continue to leave no stone unturned while uncovering the money and assets gain through illegal means.”

IRS Special Agent in Charge Aouate stated that, “Drug dealers and the people they solicit to help them, like any other criminals, are motivated by greed. IRS Criminal Investigation’s unique role is to follow the money trail and, in partnership with DEA and other law enforcement agencies, identify all the guilty parties, shutting them down for good.”

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Janice Terbush.



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January 31, 2008

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**EVENT: Conviction**

**Defendant: William Lee Sparks**

## **HOLLY MAN CONVICTED OF DEALING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

### ***Court to Determine at Sentencing Defendant's Role in Death Of 25-Year-Old Navy Sailor***

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William Lee Sparks, 57, of Holly, Michigan, was convicted in United States District Court today to distributing the prescription drugs percocet, codeine, and Xanax, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Joining in the announcement was Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge, Detroit FBI, and Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard.

As part of the plea agreement, Sparks agreed to allow the Court to determine whether the evidence also showed that he distributed fentanyl in a manner that resulted in the death of another person.

According to information presented to the Court, Sparks, an army veteran, sold drugs that he had obtained from doctors at Veterans Administration facilities in Ann Arbor and Flint to treat various medical conditions.

The Indictment charged Sparks with distributing controlled substances resulting in the death of another person. The documents presented to the Court alleged that Jason Lee

Cremer, a 25-year-old navy sailor from Ortonville stationed at the U.S. Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Florida bought drugs from Sparks. Cremer had visited Sparks while on leave during the Labor Day holiday in 2005. Cremer returned to his posting in Florida, where he died of a drug overdose on September 12, 2005. According to the Jacksonville County Medical Examiner, the cause of death was fentanyl toxicity, a finding confirmed by Oakland County Medical Examiner L.J. Dragovic.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Prescription drug abuse is a serious and growing threat, one which carries dangerous consequences both for users and for society. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service and the Oakland County Sheriff are to be commended for their determination in getting to the bottom of this case."

Distribution of controlled substances is punishable by up to 20 years' imprisonment. Pursuant to his plea agreement, Sparks is facing a sentence of 2 1/2 to 5 years. At sentencing, the court is to consider whether Sparks distributed fentanyl to Cremer and whether fentanyl toxicity was the cause of Cremer's death. No sentencing date has been set.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys David Gardey and Leonid Feller.



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Stephen Moore - IRS CI (313) 234-2410

February 4, 2008

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**EVENT: Guilty Plea**

**Defendant: William Arce**

**HIGHLAND INSURANCE AGENT PLEADS GUILTY  
TO FAILING TO FILE TAX RETURNS**

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William Arce, 50, of Highland, a self-employed insurance agent, pleaded guilty to two counts of willfully failing to file federal income tax returns for the year 2003 and 2004, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division.

An August 2007 information charged Arce with five counts of failure to pay tax for the years 1998 through 2002, and the two counts of failure to file tax returns.

According to court records, from 1998 through 2004, Arce received over \$1 million in taxable income and failed to pay over \$200,000 in taxes due and owing.

“Our system depends on the voluntary compliance of citizens with our shared responsibility to pay taxes. Prosecution of individuals who intentionally conceal income and evade taxes is a vital element in maintaining public confidence in our tax system” said U.S.

Attorney Murphy.

"The majority of American taxpayers file accurate tax returns and pay their taxes timely," said Aouate. "Part of our mission is to assure those honest taxpayers that everyone pays their fair share at the time it is due and owing."

Failure to file tax returns is a misdemeanor and carries a maximum sentence of not more than a year imprisonment and a \$25,000 fine per count.

Mr. Murphy commended the special agents of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Regina R. McCullough is prosecuting the case.





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Greg Palmore - ICE (313) 226-0726

February 4, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Gary Wetmore**

**BELLEVILLE MAN SENTENCED TO 18 YEARS FOR RECEIPT OF CHILD  
PORNOGRAPHY AND BEING A FELON IN POSSESSION OF FIREARMS**

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A 45-year-old Belleville man, who possessed over 10,000 images and movie files of child pornography was sentenced today in federal court to 18 years in prison, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Joining in the announcement was Brian Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Detroit Division.

Gary Wetmore, of Belleville, was sentenced as a result of his pleading guilty to one felony count of receipt of child pornography and one felony count of being a felon in possession of firearms before United States District Judge David M. Lawson.

The information presented to the court at the time of the plea showed that Wetmore, who had been previously convicted on child pornography charges as well as criminal sexual conduct in the first degree, used a credit card to purchase access to child pornography websites. During a search of the defendant's residence, agents seized four computers and several storage media which contained tens of thousands of images and movie files of child pornography. The images that Wetmore possessed included minors, under the age of 12,

engaged in sexually explicit conduct and images that depict the children subjected to sadistic, masochistic and other violent acts. Also found during the search were three firearms.

“This defendant’s collection included the possession of tens of thousands of images, making this defendant one of the most prolific collectors of child pornography that we’ve seen in this district,” U.S. Attorney Murphy stated. “Federal laws that target the child pornography trade exist to eliminate the victimization of children all over the world because those who collect and possess child pornography create the demand which fuels the marketplace for this insidious practice. We will prosecute these crimes vigorously.”

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov)

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Saima Mohsin.



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Vera Fedorak - ATF (313) 202-3407

February 4, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Rodolfo Moreno**

**“DETROIT THUG LORDZ” MEMBER SENTENCED TO 12 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON**

***Younger Brother Sentence To 32 Months In Custody***

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Rodolfo Moreno, 20, of Detroit was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment in federal court today, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Joining in the announcement was Special Agent In Charge Thomas E. Brandon, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Moreno pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana before United States District Judge David Lawson on September 19, 2007. This was Moreno's fourth felony drug conviction and he was sentenced as a career offender under federal sentencing guidelines.

As part of his plea, Moreno admitted to membership in the “Detroit Thug Lordz” or “DTL,” an armed drug trafficking gang in northwest Detroit, and to distributing crack cocaine on the gang's behalf. The Detroit Thug Lordz territory ran along West Warren Avenue and extended from Evergreen to the Southfield Freeway. The group maintained drug houses on Woodmont, Lawndale, Winthrop, Rockdale, Longacre, and Rosemont Streets. Firearms were

kept at and moved among the various houses for protection. Drug sales were accomplished through calls to pre-arranged cellular telephone numbers and deliveries made with rented vehicles. Gang members were paid as much as \$5,000 per month for distributing various drugs, including crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana. Minors were used to distribute drugs on the gang's behalf.

“Gangs like the Thug Lordz can be beaten when federal, state, and local law enforcement team up with community groups to fight organized drug trafficking and the dangers it brings to our neighborhoods,” said U.S. Attorney Murphy. “That is the purpose of our Operation TIDE, which partners all law enforcement stakeholders in the City of Detroit to provide hope to residents and to take violent drug offenders off the streets. Today’s sentence is an example of the results that can be achieved from such teamwork.”

Federal agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives ("ATF"), assisted by Detroit Police Department officers, investigated the gang's activities between May 2, 2006 and February 13, 2007. Fifteen undercover purchases of crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana were made. Four of the gang's drug houses were raided and additional seizures were made from gang members' vehicles. In total, agents secured 66 grams of crack cocaine, 67 grams of powder cocaine, and 4.6 kilograms of marijuana.

“The sentence to be served by this gang member illustrates the positive impact of focused task forces like Operation TIDE. We will continue our joint enforcement efforts to rid the City of Detroit of the violence that is bred by drugs and guns,” stated SAC Brandon.

On Friday, February 1, Moreno's younger brother, Michael Moreno, 19, was sentenced to 32 months imprisonment for his role in the Detroit Thug Lordz conspiracy by Judge Lawson. Michael Moreno had pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute cocaine and marijuana on September 19, 2007.

Still awaiting sentencing for their drug trafficking activities are co-defendants Nicholas Jaime, a/k/a Kilo, 21, of Detroit; Hassan Aljibory, 23, of Warren; Randi Carl Diggs, 19, of Detroit; and Karen Haskins, 49, of Detroit. Two defendants in the case, Isaias Quesada, 23, of Detroit, and Omar Gladson, 20, of Detroit are scheduled for trial on April 8.

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](http://www.psnworks.org).

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Leonid Feller.



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February 6, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Sandra Fujimoto Collins**

### **BIRMINGHAM WOMAN SENTENCED IN HOAX THREAT**

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A Birmingham woman was sentenced today to two years' probation and more than \$100,000 in fines and restitution for sending an anthrax hoax threat to a government office in Oregon, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Sandra Fujimoto Collins, 59, was sentenced by Judge Marianne O. Battani in U.S. District Court in Detroit. Judge Battani departed upward from the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines to impose a fine of \$75,000, and ordered \$34,660 in restitution.

Collins pleaded guilty in September to mailing a note to the tax assessor in Multnomah County, Oregon, stating that the note was covered with anthrax. The offense occurred in November 2005, shutting down the Multnomah County Building and requiring the affected employees to be quarantined for six hours. During the hearing, Collins and her attorney stated that she sent the letter in frustration over a dispute about property she owns in Oregon.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "A false threat carries the same disruptive effect to government functioning as a real threat, and although there may be no harm to persons, the fear of harm created by such threats is very real indeed. Such threats also undermine our ability to protect our citizens, by diverting resources better spent on real

dangers to the community.”

The case was investigated by special agents of the FBI in Portland, Oregon. The offense took place in the District of Oregon, however, the case was transferred to the Eastern District of Michigan at the request of the defendant .



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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February 6, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Denise Marilyn Nichols**

**FORMER SECRETARY-TREASURER OF COMMUNICATIONS  
WORKERS OF AMERICA (CWA) LOCAL 4050 SENTENCED  
FOR EMBEZZLING UNION ASSETS**

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A former Secretary-Treasurer of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), Local 4050, was sentenced today to 2 years probation for charges of embezzlement of union assets, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Ian Burg, Detroit District Director of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Labor-Management Standards.

Denise Marilyn Nichols, 50, of Detroit, was sentenced by United States District Judge Sean F. Cox.

Nichols pleaded guilty on October 12, 2007, to one count of Embezzlement of Union Assets.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Embezzlement of union funds is a breach of trust that affects all union members. Union funds should not be treated as personal



spending money; such conduct will result in federal prosecution.”

At the time of her plea, Nichols admitted to the Court that between September 2002 and March 2004, she embezzled \$3,802.40 from Local 4050 by submitting time sheets for lost time for which she had already been paid by the union, and by claiming lost time for other times for which she was not entitled.

The case was investigated by the Office of Labor-Management Standards. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney James M. Wuczyna.



U.S. Department of Justice

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February 7, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Kalil Khalil**

**DEARBORN HEIGHTS TAX ACCOUNTANT SENTENCED TO FIVE  
YEARS IN PRISON IN \$21 MILLION MORTGAGE FRAUD**

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A resident of Dearborn Heights was sentenced today to 60 months' imprisonment on a conviction for wire fraud based on a 2½-year scheme to defraud mortgage lenders that resulted in over \$21 million in losses, announced Stephen J. Murphy, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan, and Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Receiving the sentence from U.S. District Judge David M. Lawson was **Kalil Khalil**, 36, a tax accountant. When he pleaded guilty in May 2007, Khalil admitted that during a 2½-year period beginning in January 2001, he participated in the preparation of fraudulent loan applications and related documents that were submitted to mortgage lenders. Each of the loan packages submitted to a mortgage lender was fraudulent in one or more of the following ways: the purpose of the loan was not to buy or refinance a residence; the borrower described on the application was not the true borrower; the description of the borrower's employment was false; documents purporting to substantiate the borrower's employment (W-2 Forms, check stubs) were bogus; the appraisal was inflated and forged; title to the property was not free and clear,

and the title company purporting to guarantee clear title was merely a name used by Khalil and his codefendant, Tariq Hamad, to carry out the scheme; and photographs were included that depicted a property other than the property identified in the loan application.

Many of the fraudulent loan packages were approved and the loan proceeds were wired from the mortgage lenders, which were located outside of the State of Michigan, to bank accounts controlled by Khalil and Hamad that were located in metropolitan Detroit in the names of the straw title companies. Khalil used most of the fraud proceeds to buy and sell stocks.

Judge Lawson also ordered Khalil to serve a 3-year term of supervised release following his release from prison and pay approximately \$11.1 million restitution to the mortgage lenders and a legitimate appraisal company whose name he used on bogus appraisals. In addition, as a part of his plea agreement with the government, Khalil agreed to forfeit his interest in bank and securities accounts containing about \$300,000 that were seized by the government.

United States Attorney Murphy said, "Mortgage fraud costs lenders millions and undermines the credibility of the market to the detriment of all. Such criminal conduct makes it harder for average people and first-time entrants into the market to get loans to support their aspirations for home ownership. The FBI deserves kudos for pursuing this kind of significant fraud."

Khalil's codefendant, Tariq Hamad, 37, of Dearborn, pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud before Judge Lawson in December 2006 and was sentenced in September 2007 to 110 months' imprisonment and ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$11.4 million. Judge Lawson noted that he would have imposed a similar term of imprisonment on Khalil had it not been for Khalil's substantial cooperation with the government in unrelated investigations being supervised by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The investigation of this case was conducted by the FBI. The case was prosecuted by

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Stephen Hiyama and Julie Beck.



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February 11, 2008

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**EVENT: Guilty Plea**

**Defendant: Ermira Hatija**

**ALBANIAN CITIZEN PLEADS GUILTY TO ENGINEERING  
IMPORTATION OF 14,000 ECSTACY PILLS**

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Ermira Hatija, an Albanian citizen and former international fugitive, pled guilty in federal court today to felony drug charges, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced.

Joining in the announcement was Special Agent in Charge Brian Moskowitz of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Hatija pled guilty to conspiring to import ecstasy pills into the United States (ecstasy is 3,4 methylenedioxyamphetamine and is sometimes referred to as "MDMA") before United States District Judge Gerald E. Rosen.

Hatija conspired with at least three other individuals to import 14,000 ecstasy pills into the United States from Windsor, Ontario. On December 18, 2005, Bledian Baruti and Timour Golovin were arrested as they were crossing the Ambassador Bridge into Detroit. Customs officials discovered over 14,000 ecstasy pills concealed in their car. At her plea hearing, Hatija admitted that she had conspired with Baruti and the source of supply of the ecstasy pills to import the drugs into the United States. Hatija recruited Baruti to import the drugs. Baruti and

Golovin both pled guilty in the Eastern District of Michigan and are serving prison sentences for their involvement in the conspiracy.

Hatija was first arrested on April 19, 2006 in Detroit, Michigan. After being released on bond at that time, Hatija jumped bond and fled the United States. In August 2007, Hatija was caught in Germany after she used a false passport after she arrived in Germany on a flight from Canada. After the German authorities returned Hatija to Canada, the Canadian authorities expelled Hatija across the border into the United States in Montana. Hatija was then arrested in Montana and transported to Detroit to face the charges against her.

“United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the United States Marshal’s Service are to be commended for pursuing this international fugitive and ensuring that she be convicted and imprisoned for helping to engineer a significant importation of 14,000 ecstasy pills and then trying to flee the consequences of her actions,” United States Attorney Murphy said.

A conspiracy to import controlled substances into the United States is punishable by up to 20 years imprisonment. Sentencing in the case has been set for May 12, 2008 date has been set.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney David Gardey.



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Stephen Moore - IRS (313) 234-2410

February 11, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Issa Hassan Unis**

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**Dearborn Man Pleads Guilty to Filing False Tax Return**

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A Dearborn man was sentenced to 5 months incarceration at a Residential Re-entry Center followed by 5 months home confinement during a 1 year of supervised release for filing a false tax return, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Issa Hassan Unis, 40, of Dearborn, was sentenced by United States District Judge Julian Abel Cook, Jr.

Unis pled guilty to one count of filing a false tax return for the year 2002, for failing to report income he received in the form of cash payments from his cousin, the manager of a BP gas station and convenience store Unis owned in Detroit. Unreported income for the additional years of 2000, 2001 and 2003 on Unis' tax returns was also included. Defendant was ordered to pay restitution of approximately \$141,000 for the tax losses for those years including interest and penalties. Unis also agreed to pay \$50,000 to the U.S. Department of Agriculture arising from food stamp fraud conducted at the BP gas station and convenience store. These amounts will be paid from over \$367,000 in cash seized from Unis during the execution of search warrants arising out of the food stamp fraud investigation. The Court further ordered Unis to pay a fine of \$30,000.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, “Cash operated businesses can easily give rise to unreported income that present a substantial challenge to enforcement of our tax laws. This case evidences the coordination of government agencies’ investigative resources as the tax offense investigation arose out of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s investigation of the food stamp fraud being conducted at the gas station and convenience store owned by Mr. Unis.”

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Ross I. MacKenzie and was investigated by Special Agent Jeremy Haynie of the Internal Revenue Service and Mark McClutchey of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.





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February 11, 2008

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**EVENT: New Hires for 2008**

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**MURPHY APPOINTS NEW ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS**

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Four new lawyers have been appointed to serve as Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs) for the Eastern District of Michigan, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today. The newly appointed AUSAs are Matthew A. Roth, Joan Hartman, Joseph L. Falvey, Jr., and Eaton Paige Curtis.

**Matthew A. Roth** has served as a Special Assistant United States Attorney in this District since 2006 and has accordingly been working on our child pornography and child exploitation priority matters. Matt now joins our office as a permanent AUSA from the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office where he was an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney assigned to the Child Sexual Assault Unit. Matt also most recently served as a member of Prosecuting Attorney David Gorcyca's executive team. Matt received his law degree from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law in 1998 and his undergraduate degree from Indiana University. He will be assigned to the General Crimes Unit and will be trained, among other things, to work on significant Computer Hacking and Intellectual Property ("CHIP") matters arising in both the office's General Crimes and Economic Crimes Units.

**Joan Hartman** is already a longtime veteran of the Department of Justice. Joan served as a supervisor for the Fraud Section of the Commercial Litigation Branch of the Department's

Civil Division in Washington, D.C. for eleven years. During her time at Main Justice, Joan worked on numerous highly complex civil litigation matters involving, among other things, international issues such as defending our nation against Iran's claim that the United States violated the Algiers Accords by failing to release Iranian assets after the Iranian hostage crisis ended. Joan also pursued cases involving Iran-Contra funds in Switzerland along with bid rigging matters against Japanese companies overseas. Joan has been described by Justice Department insiders as "the nation's foremost authority on False Claims Act and qui tam legal issues." Joan, a 1983 graduate of Yale Law School, served as an editor of the Yale Law Journal. She will be assigned to the Affirmative Litigation Unit of the Civil Division, where she will make immediate contributions.

**Joseph L. Falvey, Jr.** joins the Civil Division's Asset Forfeiture Unit. Prior to accepting a position as an AUSA, Joe was a Professor of Law at the Ave Maria School of Law School, where he also served as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Joe Falvey, however, is not solely a member of academia: he also has the distinction of serving as an Appellate Judge for the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals where he presides over cases involving court-martial criminal convictions. Prior to serving as a military judge, Joe worked his way through Marine Corps' Judge Advocate General's ("JAG") program, in which he tried more than 300 cases as both a prosecutor and a defense lawyer. Joe earned his law degree from the University of Notre Dame Law School, Cum Laude, in 1987 and he earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Notre Dame as well. In addition, Joe obtained a Masters of Laws degree with high honors from the Judge Advocate General's School in 1991.

**Eaton Paige Curtis** will be assigned to the Criminal Division's General Crimes Unit. Eaton comes to the office from the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office where she served as a Special Assignment prosecutor responsible for prosecution of felony matters, many involving witnesses under the age of 16. She has tried more than 100 cases to verdict. Prior to her work at Wayne County, Eaton worked for the Honorable Maura Corrigan, Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court. Eaton Curtis is a 2003 graduate of William and Mary School of Law and she earned her undergraduate degree from Middlebury College in Vermont.

United States Attorney Murphy said, “Today’s announcement of these appointments marks our continuing commitment to developing a legacy as the finest United States Attorney’s office in the nation. Our hiring efforts serve to underscore my personal commitment to the development and shepherding of our office’s most important resources – our human resources. I am delighted to think that lawyers of this caliber would want to join the highly proficient staff of attorneys and legal professionals already on staff here in the Eastern District of Michigan.”

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. 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.

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



**U.S. Department of Justice**

**Stephen J. Murphy  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Michigan**

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**For Immediate Release:**

**Contact:** Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758

February 12, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Alex Zakharia**

### **Miami Surgeon Sentenced in Detroit Federal Court**

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A vascular surgeon licensed in Florida, and practicing in the Miami area, forfeited his medical license and was sentenced to 30 days in a half-way house, one year probation, and a \$100,000 fine, all for lying while giving testimony as an expert witness, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Alex Zakharia, 68, was sentenced today by United States District Court Judge Paul D. Borman. Zakharia was also ordered to pay more than \$16,000 in restitution.

Zakharia plead guilty in 2007 to contempt of court. He had held himself out as an expert witness in medical malpractice cases, and in order to enhance his credibility in cases involving coronary artery bypass grafts, Dr. Zakharia falsely testified that he had performed at least 10-12 such surgeries each year, when in fact he had performed none for the several years before his testimony.

At sentencing, Judge Borman stated that the offense was a serious violation of the processes of the court. United States Attorney Murphy stated, "Today's sentence demonstrates that those who hold themselves out as 'experts' offering testimony in legal

proceedings must respect the system as well as their profession by telling the truth. Lying under oath is a crime and when it takes place in federal proceedings in Detroit, we will in all likelihood prosecute it.”

In announcing the sentence, United States Attorney Murphy commended the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The prosecution was handled by Assistant United States Attorney Lynn Helland.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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February 12, 2008

---

**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Kenneth Koehler**

**CONVICTED SEX OFFENDER SENTENCED FOR  
POSSESSION CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

---

A convicted sex offender was sentenced this afternoon to ten years in federal prison for using a means of interstate commerce to entice a minor to engage in sexual activity. in violation of federal law, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Desmond Scanlon, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Secret Service.

Kenneth Koehler, 56, of Hudsonville, Michigan, was sentenced by United States District Judge David M. Lawson.

Koehler pleaded guilty in October 2007 to one count of Enticing a Minor for Sex. At the time of his plea, Koehler admitted to engaging in on-line internet chat communications (via a Yahoo! chatroom and instant messenger) with "Caitlin," an undercover officer posing as a 13 year old female in Livonia, Michigan. During chats which occurred on approximately 30 different dates, the defendant persuaded, induced, enticed, and coerced, "Caitlin" to meet with him for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity.

United States Attorney Murphy said "Today's 10-year sentence demonstrates that enticing a minor to engage in sexual activity on the internet is a serious crime that can result in a correspondingly significant criminal penalty. My office will not sit idly by while some in society attempt to prey upon our children and put them at great risk of abuse. Protecting our children from on-line predators is a major priority of this office."

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov/](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov/).

U.S. Attorney Murphy thanked United States Secret Service for their successful investigation of the case. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Saima Mohsin.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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February 12, 2008

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**EVENT: Guilty Plea**

**Defendant: Robert Lee Ardis**

**FERNDALE RESIDENT PLEADS GUILTY  
TO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FRAUD**

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A 56-year-old resident of Ferndale, Michigan, pled guilty to one count of mail fraud in an Information charging him with defrauding the State of Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Pleading guilty before U.S. District Judge Robert H. Cleland was Robert Lee Ardis, who has remained in custody since his arrest on November 21, 2007 on the fraud charges.

The fraud stems from false employee unemployment insurance claims Ardis submitted to the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency beginning in November 2004 and continuing periodically until the time of his arrest last November. Ardis submitted claims on behalf of fictitious employees or employees who had done no, or little, work for employer entities controlled by Ardis such as Ardis Landscape & Design and Advance Corrugated Packing. Ardis would file quarterly earnings reports with the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (MUIA) for these employees purporting to be full time employees for the companies. The reports included the name, social security number, and wages paid to each of the employees which information the MUIA uses to determine the amount of jobless benefits workers may



receive should they become unemployed. The MUIA would issue unemployment insurance benefit checks and mail them to the addresses provided on the claims. These were often mailboxes at apartment buildings in Detroit. Ardis would then retrieve the checks from the mailboxes and cash them. The fraud totaled to approximately \$136,000.

“The Federal and State insurance systems to aid the unemployed are designed to provide benefits to those who are out of work due to no fault of their own” said U.S. Attorney Murphy. “The purpose of the program is to lessen the effects of unemployment during these difficult economic times through cash payments made directly to laid-off workers, insuring that at least a significant portion of the necessities of life can be met on a week-to-week basis while the worker seeks employment. Thefts, such as the fraudulent means used in this case, are inexcusable. Our office will continue to address illegal conduct through vigilant oversight and prosecution. I commend the state and federal investigators as well as the lawyers in our office who worked so hard to present this case.”

In Michigan, the unemployment insurance system is administered for the Federal government by the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency. The U.S. Department of Labor funds all administrative costs, including salaries, office expenses, and computer equipment utilized. The unemployment insurance benefits are financed by taxes on employers and supplemented by federal funds appropriated by the U.S. Department of Labor when State benefit funds are exhausted.

Mr. Ardis' sentence has been scheduled for June 5, 2008. He will remain in custody pending his sentence.

The case of this case has been conducted jointly by Investigators of the State of Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency and the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General. The case has been prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ross I. MacKenzie.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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Steve Moore - IRS - (313) 234-2410

February 12, 2008

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**EVENT:Guilty Plea**

**Defendant: Paul M. Wolf**

**BIRMINGHAM STEEL TRADER PLEADS GUILTY TO TAX EVASION**

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A Birmingham Steel Trader pleaded guilty today to two counts of tax evasion, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Maurice Aouate, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation.

Pleading guilty before U.S. District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff was Paul M. Wolf, 49, of Birmingham.

According to court records, during an Internal Revenue Service civil audit of Wolf's tax returns, the revenue agent detected badges of fraud and referred the case to the Criminal Investigation Division of IRS. IRS' criminal investigation showed that Wolf knowingly and willfully filed false 2002 and 2003 tax returns with the IRS, which included Wolf overstating his mortgage interest deduction, reporting more than \$400,000 on these tax returns when his actual mortgage interest payments were approximately \$87,000. Wolf also overstated his charitable contributions on his 2003 by more than \$42,000.

“Whether omitting income or overstating deductions, falsifying the amount of tax due and owing to the IRS constitutes fraud, which we will continue to monitor and prosecute as appropriate. No individual in a society of laws has the right to evade paying their fair share of tax. I commend the IRS agents and lawyers in our office whose efforts led to the successful prosecution of this case,” U.S. Attorney Murphy said.

“Cheating on your taxes is the same as stealing,” said Aouate. “We should not expect the honest taxpayer to foot the bill for those who evade paying their fair share in taxes and the prosecution of these individuals are a vital element in maintaining the public confidence in our tax system.”

Tax evasion carries a maximum sentence of 5 years imprisonment and a \$100,000 fine per count. A sentencing date was set for May 13, 2008, at 10:00 a.m.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney William J. Sauget.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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Vera Fedorak - ATF (313) 202-3407

February 14, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Hassan Aljibory**

**“DETROIT THUG LORDZ” MEMBER SENTENCED TO 2 1/2 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON**

*Iraqi Native To Be Deported Following Term Of Imprisonment*

---

Hassan Aljibory, 21, of Warren was sentenced to 30 months imprisonment in federal court today, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Joining in the announcement was Special Agent-In-Charge Thomas E. Brandon, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Aljibory pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana before United States District Judge David Lawson on September 19, 2007. In addition to this conviction, Aljibory has 20 outstanding warrants from state courts throughout southeastern Michigan.

As part of his plea, Aljibory admitted to membership in the “Detroit Thug Lordz” or “DTL,” an armed drug trafficking gang in northwest Detroit, and to distributing crack cocaine on the gang's behalf. The Detroit Thug Lordz territory ran along West Warren Avenue and extended from Evergreen to the Southfield Freeway. The group maintained drug houses on Woodmont, Lawndale, Winthrop, Rockdale, Longacre, and Rosemont Streets. Firearms were kept at and moved among the various houses for protection. Drug sales were accomplished

through calls to pre-arranged cellular telephone numbers and deliveries made with rented vehicles. Gang members were paid as much as \$5,000 per month for distributing various drugs, including crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana. Minors were used to distribute drugs on the gang's behalf.

Federal agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives ("ATF"), assisted by Detroit Police Department officers, investigated the gang's activities between May 2, 2006 and February 13, 2007. Fifteen undercover purchases of crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana were made. Four of the gang's drug houses were raided and additional seizures were made from gang members' vehicles. In total, agents secured 66 grams of crack cocaine, 67 grams of powder cocaine, and 4.6 kilograms of marijuana.

After the DTL indictment was unsealed, Aljibory fled to Mexico, along with co-defendant Michael Moreno. He was arrested by border patrol agents in El Paso, Texas attempting to reenter the United States on May 23, 2007.

Aljibory was born in Najif, Iraq, and entered the United States as a refugee in September 1997. As a result of his felony conviction, he is subject to deportation after serving his sentence.

"Gangs like the Thug Lordz can be beaten when federal, state, and local law enforcement team up with community groups to fight organized drug trafficking and the dangers it brings to our neighborhoods," said U.S. Attorney Murphy. "That is the purpose of our Operation TIDE, which partners all law enforcement stakeholders in the City of Detroit to provide hope to residents and to take violent drug offenders off the streets. Today's sentence is an example of the results that can be achieved from such teamwork."

"The sentence to be served by this gang member reiterates the need for focused task forces like Operation TIDE. We will continue our joint enforcement efforts to rid the City of Detroit of the violence that is bred by drugs and guns," stated Acting-SAC Temple.

On February 4, another DTL member, Rodolfo Moreno, 20, was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. His younger brother, Michael Moreno, was sentenced to 32 months imprisonment for his role in the Detroit Thug Lordz conspiracy. Michael Moreno had pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute cocaine and marijuana on September 19, 2007.

Still awaiting sentencing for their drug trafficking activities are co-defendants Nicholas Jaime, a/k/a Kilo, 21, of Detroit; Randi Carl Diggs, 19, of Detroit; and Karen Haskins, 49, of Detroit. Two defendants in the case, Isaias Quesada, 23, of Detroit, and Omar Gladson, 20, of Detroit are scheduled for trial on April 8.

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](http://www.psnworks.org).

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Leonid Feller.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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February 21, 2008

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**EVENT: Guilty Plea**

**Defendant: Fidencio Saucedo**

**DEFENDANT PLEADS GUILTY TO ATTEMPTED  
COERCION AND ENTICEMENT OF CHILDREN ON THE INTERNET**

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Stephen J. Murphy, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan, announced that Fidencio Saucedo, 51, of Colorado Springs, Colorado entered a guilty plea today to attempted coercion and enticement. Defendant Saucedo entered his plea before United States District Judge Avern Cohn.

According to information presented to the court, during the month of April 2007, Defendant Saucedo engaged in a series of online conversations with an undercover FBI agent whom he believed to be a single mother of two young children ages 3 and 5. Saucedo indicated a desire to engage in sex with the children. Saucedo proposed specific acts of sexual penetration that he would engage in with both the daughter and son. Saucedo encouraged the "mother" to bring her children to Colorado. He provided driving directions to his neighborhood and provided a telephone number for the "mother" to call when they arrived.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "The supposed anonymity of the Internet unleashes deeply troubling and dangerous conduct in some people who intend to abuse children. This case is an example of the continuing commitment of my office to go after

child sexually abusive conduct on the Internet.”

The charge is a felony and carries a mandatory minimum sentence of ten years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. This prosecution was facilitated through Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide Department of Justice initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov/)”





**U.S. Department of Justice**

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February 25, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Leo Joseph Rudolph**

**MACOMB COUNTY MAN SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS  
FOR CHILD PORNOGRAPHY MANUFACTURE AND DISTRIBUTION**

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Leo Joseph Rudolph, 44, of Ray Township, Michigan was sentenced today in Federal District Court following his October 2007 guilty plea to manufacture of child pornography, child pornography transportation, child pornography receipt, and, one count of child pornography possession, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy. Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Brian Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge, Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Rudolph was sentenced by the Honorable David M. Lawson to 30 years in federal prison, to be followed by supervised release for the rest of his life.

From January until May 2007, Rudolph, enticed, threatened and otherwise coerced a 9 year-old girl to engage in sexual acts with him. He photographed and videotaped these acts and later distributed them on the Internet. At the time of his arrest, Rudolph was found in possession of well in excess of 600 images of child pornography, which depicted real children, including the victim, engaged in explicit sexual conduct. Rudolph had downloaded much of his collection of child pornographic images and/or videos from the Internet.

At the time of the sentence, Assistant United States Attorney Jeanine Jones advised the court that the conduct of the defendant and the images that he distributed defied description by word, but cataloged the ongoing sexual assault and abuse of a child. She advocated that the extended incarceration of Rudolph would protect children from being victimized by him in the future.

United States Attorney Stephen Murphy said: “The link between child molestation and child pornography could not be any more powerfully demonstrated than it is in this case. For a man to insinuate himself into a single-parent family in order to sexually abuse an innocent 9-year-old girl is too despicable for words, and fully deserves the 30-year prison sentence handed down today. We cannot forget that the Internet market for child pornography depends on the creation of a fresh supply of images showing the criminal sexual abuse of children. This is why these cases are and will remain an enforcement priority for my office.”

Murphy praised the work of agents of the DHS-ICE Detroit Division, as well as the work of ICE agents in Oregon who originally located the images. Their dedication of time and skill necessary to work to reveal and apprehend these predators has been most successful. The DHS-ICE computer crimes and child exploitation unit, Murphy said, consistently demonstrates professionalism and dedication in their aggressive and thorough investigation of these cases.

Assistant United States Attorneys John O'Brien and Jeanine Jones prosecuted case for the United States.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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February 26, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Eifat El Aouar**

**WIFE OF LASHISH OWNER AND SISTER OF FORMER CIA/ FBI EMPLOYEE  
SENTENCED ON NATURALIZATION FRAUD CHARGES**

---

Eifat El Aouar, 40, of Plymouth, a former Vice President of Finance for La Shish, Inc. and the spouse of La Shish owner, Talal Chahine, was sentenced today in federal court in Detroit, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

El Aouar was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Avern Cohn to serve three months in prison and was stripped of her U.S. citizenship as a result of her pleading guilty in November, 2007 to charges of conspiracy and naturalization fraud. The three month sentence will run concurrent with the 18 month prison sentence El Aouar is currently serving on tax evasion charges. Upon her release from federal custody, El Aouar will be subject to deportation proceedings

According to court documents, El Aouar entered the United States from Lebanon on a

six month non-immigrant visitor visa which was extended once to June 11, 1989. After El Aouar's visa expired, she remained in the country residing in Taylor, Michigan with her sister, Nada Nadim Prouty and Samar Kahlil Nabbouh.

On November 15, 1990, El Aouar entered into a fraudulent marriage with Gordon Wymer in Detroit, Michigan for the purpose of evading U.S. immigration laws. El Aouar later submitted a series of false, fraudulent and forged documents and letters to federal immigration officials to verify the validity of the fraudulent marriage in order to obtain permanent residency status, and, later, U.S. citizenship, thereby committing naturalization fraud. In fact, El Aouar hired Wymer to marry her, never had any relationship with Wymer and never resided with him as husband and wife. On June 30, 1995, El Aouar filed for divorce.

In addition, El Aouar defrauded the Federal Bureau of Investigation into hiring her sister Nada Nadim Prouty in 1998, by serving as a reference for her and withholding derogatory information about Prouty from the FBI. In November 2007, Prouty pleaded guilty to charges of fraudulently obtaining U.S. citizenship, which she later used to gain employment at the FBI and CIA; accessing a federal computer system to unlawfully query information about herself, El Aouar, Talal Chahine and the terrorist organization Hizballah.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "With so many honest and hard-working immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship, and with all the rights and privileges that citizenship confers, those who obtain this precious right by fraud cannot be permitted to remain unchallenged. As evidenced by today's plea, we will take appropriate action, including filing criminal charges, in such situations."

"Becoming an American citizen is a privilege, not a right. We will not tolerate those who pledge allegiance to this nation knowing that the oath they took was achieved through lies," said Brian M. Moskowitz, special agent in charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Detroit. "ICE special agents will work with our partners in the U.S. Attorney's Office to ensure that those privileges are removed."

El Aouar's husband, Talal Chahine is currently a fugitive believed to be in Lebanon. He was charged in 2006 in the Eastern District of Michigan with tax evasion in connection with a scheme to conceal more than \$20 million in cash received by La Shish restaurants and to route funds to persons in Lebanon. Last year, Chahine was also charged in the Eastern District of Michigan, along with a senior ICE official in Detroit and others in a bribery and extortion conspiracy in which federal immigration benefits were allegedly awarded to illegal aliens in exchange for money and, in a separate indictment, with Conspiracy to Defraud the United States in connection with the marriage and naturalization fraud involving Nada Prouty, Elfat El Aouar and Samar Spinelli.

Mr. Murphy commended the Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the U.S. Department of State, Diplomatic Security Service, and the Internal Revenue Service for their excellent investigative efforts leading to the successful prosecution of Elfat El Aouar.

The case was prosecuted by Eric M. Straus, Chief of the National Security Unit, and Kenneth R. Chadwell, Assistant U.S. Attorney, from the U.S. Attorney's office for the Eastern District of Michigan, as well as Mark J. Jebson, Special Assistant U.S. Attorney and Senior Assistant Chief Counsel for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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Stephen Moore, IRS CI (313) 234-2410

February 28, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: Abraham Nicola Nunu**

**Dearborn Heights CPA Goes to Jail for Filing False Tax Returns**

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Abraham Nicola Nunu, 42, of Dearborn Heights, a Certified Public Accountant, was sentenced to a year and a day imprisonment, followed by one year of supervised release, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. United States District Court Judge David M. Lawson also ordered Nunu to pay a fine of \$3,000 and restitution to the Internal Revenue Service. The amount of the restitution will be based on the tax loss, plus interest and penalties, which will be determined at a later date.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice M. Aouate, Special Agent in Charge of IRS Criminal Investigation.

According to court records, Nunu filed false 2000 and 2001 personal income tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service, signed under penalties of perjury. The tax returns, as filed, reflected taxable income of approximately \$99,000, when Nunu knew the true taxable income for those tax years were approximately \$337,000. On October 31, 2007, Nunu pleaded guilty to the two counts of filing a false tax return.

“This is an example of a defendant who put his professional license – and his liberty – at risk for several thousand dollars. Although he was an accountant, the defendant did a poor job of figuring the costs that go along with intentionally filing false tax returns,” U.S. Attorney Murphy said.

"Nunu should have known better than to use his special skills as a CPA to intentionally conceal his own income," said Aouate. "Especially, since, he is in the profession and business of helping others to file accurate tax returns."

United States Attorney Murphy thanked the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation for their investigation of the case. The United States was represented by Assistant United States Attorney Keith E. Corbett.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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February 28, 2008

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**EVENT: Indictment**

**Defendant: Thomas Ross**

**BUREAU OF PRISONS EMPLOYEE INDICTED FOR ACCEPTING BRIBES  
IN EXCHANGE FOR BRINGING CONTRABAND INTO PRISON**

---

A federal Grand Jury in Detroit, Michigan has returned an indictment against a United States Bureau of Prisons employee for accepting bribes in return for bringing contraband into the federal correctional institution at Milan, Michigan, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Charged in the Indictment is Thomas Ross, 42, of Romulus a Recreational Specialist employed by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Prisons.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Edward Diner, Special Agent in Charge of the Chicago Field Office, Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General.

The indictment charges that Ross received payments for bringing contraband into the correctional institution between August, 2005 and May, 2007, for use by inmates at the institution, in violation of his official duty.



United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, “Today’s charges allege not only a very serious breach of trust, but significant criminal violations as well. Conduct such as the defendant’s in this case presents substantial security issues because it involves an employee at a federal correctional institution who allegedly accepted bribes in exchange for supplying members of the prison population with contraband. The Department of Justice simply will not tolerate corruption within its own ranks – we will prosecute aggressively as warranted.”

Under the statute, Ross faces up to 15 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.

This case was investigated by the Detroit Area Office of the Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General.



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**For Immediate Release:**

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February 29, 2008

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**EVENT: Sentenced**

**Defendant: James Tague**

**FORMER SCHOOL OFFICIAL IMPRISONED FOR  
DEFRAUDING SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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A former purchasing agent of the Chippewa Valley School District ("CVSD"), was sentenced to 42 months in prison for defrauding the CVSD, a federally funded program, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

James Tague, 60, of Clarkston was sentenced by United States District Judge Paul D. Borman. Tague was also ordered to repay the School District \$2,380,585, which included the cost of the School District's internal investigation. Judge Borman further ordered Tague to pay a fine of \$75,000 and to serve three years of supervised release upon leaving federal prison.

United States Attorney 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.

At the time of sentencing, Tague forfeited two real properties (one in Florida and one in Nevada) and \$100,000 cash to the United States. The United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan will request that the Attorney General apply any proceeds from the sale of the properties and the \$100,000 in cash to the restitution that Tague owes the

Chippewa Valley School District.

The fraud from CVSD occurred between 1998 and 2006 while Tague worked as its purchasing agent. Tague's duties at the CVSD included obtaining bids from furniture and other school equipment suppliers and awarding contracts to the lowest qualified bidder. Unbeknownst to the CVSD, Tague rigged bids and awarded contracts to Megasource, Inc., a company Tague owned and operated under that name and the assumed names "DSC Office Products and Supplies," "Design Seating" and "Mid American School Supply."

United States Attorney Stephen Murphy said, "When a school official steals from a federally funded educational institution, it's a fraud on the taxpaying public. I commend the work of the FBI in this investigation. Results like the one in this case help protect the integrity of government services. The restitution and fines will ensure that the defendant will not benefit from his crimes once he is released from prison."

The investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys R. Michael Bullotta and Philip Ross, whom U.S. Attorney Murphy thanked and congratulated.