



# UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

*United States Attorney Donald W. Washington  
Western District of Louisiana*

---

United States Courthouse • 300 Fannin Street, Suite 3201 • Shreveport, Louisiana 71101-3068 • (318) 676-3600  
United States Courthouse • 800 Lafayette Street, Suite 2200 • Lafayette, Louisiana 70501-7206 • (337) 262-6618

---

For Immediate Release  
September 9, 2009

Contact: Donald W. Washington (337-262-6618)  
William J. Flanagan (318-676-3600)

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/law>

## **FIVE SENTENCED ON FEDERAL CHARGES FOR DEFRAUDING BOSSIER PARISH SCHOOL BOARD**

### *“Screaming Eagle” Investigation Results in Prison Terms”*

SHREVEPORT, La.: Three former Bossier Parish School Board employees, along with the owners of Ark-La-Tex Air Repair, Inc., were sentenced today by U.S. District Judge S. Maurice Hicks, Jr. for defrauding the School Board of nearly \$1.2 million, United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced.

Alan V. Lee, co-owner of Ark-La-Tex Air Repair, Inc., was sentenced to 120 months in prison and three years supervised release, and was ordered to pay \$1,194,300.25 in restitution to the School Board. Garrett G. Wilson, also co-owner of the corporation was sentenced to 87 months in prison and three years supervised release for his part in the fraudulent activities. He was also ordered to pay \$1,194,300.25 in restitution.

Winfred “Randy” Johnston, Jr. and William “Mont” Rodes, Jr. were each sentenced to 87 months in prison and three years supervised release for engaging in a scheme to enrich themselves at the expense of the Bossier Parish School Board. Mark E. Rowe was sentenced to five years probation in recognition of his cooperation with the investigation. The three former employees of the Bossier Parish School Board Maintenance Department were each ordered to pay \$1,194,300.25 in restitution to the School Board. Johnston and Rodes were ordered to report to prison on October 19.

The six-month investigation by the FBI and the Bossier Parish Sheriff’s Department, code-named “Screaming Eagle,” led to a 196-count indictment against the five defendants and Ark-La-Tex Air Repair, Inc., charging conspiracy to commit mail fraud, mail fraud, and

forfeiture of the corporate assets of Air Repair. The defendants each pleaded guilty to one count of mail fraud.

Lee and Wilson, co-owners of Air Repair, charged the School Board for more expensive air conditioning equipment than was actually installed, charged for equipment that was never installed, replaced air-conditioning units that were functioning properly, and billed for the installation of air-conditioning units for schoolrooms that did not exist.

The three School Board employees, Johnston, Rodes and Rowe, falsely certified that the proper equipment was in place and failed to conduct proper inspections. They also approved invoices for payment when they knew the invoices contained false information and that Air Repair did not perform the work listed on the invoices. In addition, Johnston and Rodes would inform Wilson and Lee of the lowest bid on a particular project so they could submit the winning bid and obtain a particular contract. Some Air Repair contracts were prepared for a quick change-out that would allow the air-conditioning company to charge higher prices per unit because the work had to be completed faster. The defendants would make up emergency situations requiring the more expensive change-out.

In return, Wilson and Lee provided Johnston, Rowe and others with cash and other things of value. The three School Board employees were allowed to swipe their maintenance department credit cards at Air Repair to receive cash, with false invoices subsequently generated to cover up the fraud.

Certain assets of the defendants have been either seized or voluntarily surrendered and sold. The money derived from these assets, totaling \$495,772.09 will eventually be returned to the School Board. The retirement funds for the three School Board Employees were also ordered to be liquidated and the proceeds paid to the Bossier Parish School Board.

United States Attorney Washington stated: “As we start a new school year, teachers, parents and students, not to mention taxpayers, can only dream of what an extra \$1 million could be used for to improve Bossier Parish classrooms. Instead, that money went out the back door in a series of bribes and payoffs to a group of criminals who are now deservedly on their way to jail.”

This investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Shreveport Resident Agency, with the assistance of the Bossier Parish Sheriff’s Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Alexander C. Van Hook and Robin S. McCoy.

###