



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

**Frank J. Magill,
United States Attorney**

David Anderson, Public Affairs Specialist
(612) 664-5684; cell: (612) 730-2251

News Release

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Last 2 defendants in ID theft ring sentenced

The final two defendants in a large Twin Cities-based identity theft ring were sentenced yesterday in federal court.

On Jan. 28, in St. Paul, United States District Court Judge Paul Magnuson sentenced Tyrone Leeron Dabney, 31, Oakdale, to 70 months in prison and three years supervised release on one count of mail fraud conspiracy, one count of mail fraud and one count of aggravated identity theft. Dabney was indicted on Aug. 14, 2007, along with 11 others. He pleaded guilty on Nov. 16, 2007.

Judge Magnuson also sentenced Monica Lorena Thomas, 36, Richfield, to three years probation on one count of conspiracy, one count of aiding and abetting wire fraud, one count of aggravated identity theft and one count of aiding and abetting bank fraud. Thomas pleaded guilty on Nov. 13, 2007.

Nine other defendants already have been sentenced for their participation in the ring. They are: Jafari Tywan Banks, 29, Minneapolis (67 months in prison on one count of conspiracy, one count of wire fraud and one count of aggravated identity theft); Cornelius Winfield Walker, 28, unknown address (67 months on one count of conspiracy, one count of wire fraud and one count of aggravated identity theft); Gregory Allen Chambers, Jr., 20, St. Paul (three years probation on one count of conspiracy and one count of aiding and abetting identity theft); Kate Jacobea Christensen, 26, St. Michael (three years probation on one count of conspiracy and one count of aiding and abetting identity theft); Davina Nessa Harper, 38, Oakdale (three years probation on one count of aiding and abetting mail fraud); Angela Kaye Holmes, unknown age, unknown address (three years probation on one count of conspiracy and one count of aiding and abetting aggravated identity theft); Alvin Bernell Moore, 44, unknown address (30 months on one count of conspiracy and one count of aggravated identity theft); Nacole Marie Webster, 31, St. Paul (three years probation on one count of conspiracy and one count of aiding and abetting aggravated identity theft); and Alfonzo Eugene Williams, 30, Minneapolis (32 months on one count of conspiracy and one count of aiding and abetting aggravated identity theft).

According to their indictment and respective plea agreements, the conspiracy began in April

2006 and continued through July 2007. Its object was to use other people's identification to fraudulently acquire money and property. Several of the defendants stole files containing the identification information of numerous victims from Twin Cities-area businesses and used that information to purchase cell phones, file loan applications, obtain funds from victims' bank accounts and purchase vehicles.

"This prosecution was the result of tremendous investigative efforts by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office," said U.S. Attorney Frank J. Magill. "Their efforts resulted in the dismantling of a large identity theft ring that victimized many innocent law-abiding citizens. Identity theft is a crime that causes severe financial and non-financial harm on its victims, and this office is committed to prosecuting its perpetrators."

"The Postal Inspection Service has long been a leader in protecting the American consumer from being victimized by frauds and scams that use the U.S. mail or the mail and the Internet," said Adam P. Behnen, Assistant Postal Inspector in Charge of the St. Paul Field Office. "Postal inspectors are the public's first line of defense against the myriad of scam artists trying to defraud them of their hard-earned money."

This case was the result of an investigation by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David M. Genrich.