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# **News Release**

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## **2 sentenced for arranging fraudulent marriages**

Two men were sentenced today in federal court for participating in a conspiracy that resulted in dozens of Chinese nationals making entry into the United States based on sham marriages to United States citizens.

U.S. District Court Judge Paul Magnuson sentenced Le Guo Wu, 31, Philadelphia, Penn., and Houa Vang, 24, St. Paul, to 30 months in prison and three years supervised release and to 12 months and one day in prison along with two years supervised release Sept. 18 in St. Paul. Vang and Wu each pleaded guilty earlier this year to one count of conspiracy to profit financially from arranging, facilitating and participating in fraudulent marriages.

“These sentences make it clear that admission to the United States is not for sale,” said Claude Arnold, special agent in charge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Office of Investigations in Bloomington. “Such marriage fraud schemes not only undermine the integrity of our nation’s legal immigration system, they also pose a potential threat to our national security.”

“This conspiracy used lies and deceit to prey upon our nation’s immigration laws,” said U.S. Attorney Frank J. Magill. “In the end, this was about generating a profit by trafficking United States citizens and Chinese nationals through our immigration visa system. The integrity of our nation’s borders must be maintained, and these types of crimes will be prosecuted.”

According to their respective plea agreements, Wu led a coordinated effort to pay U.S. citizens to enter into sham marriages with Chinese nationals for the purpose of evading U.S. immigration laws, and was assisted by Vang. Both men admitted to committing marriage fraud for several purposes, including profiting financially from the arranged marriages; facilitating the fraudulent entry of Chinese aliens into the U.S.; and facilitating the fraudulent acquisition by Chinese aliens of lawful permanent residency to permit continued presence of Chinese aliens in the U.S.

Wu recruited dozens of U.S. citizens in multiple states to participate in the conspiracy beginning no later than 2004 and continuing to October 2007. He ran the operation from

Philadelphia, but also operated in the Twin Cities, New York, and from within China.

Vang recruited U.S. citizens to participate in the conspiracy beginning no later than 2006 and continuing to October 2007.

Both defendants assisted the citizens in filling out and filing petitions and other relevant documents and visa applications in connection with the fraudulent entry of the aliens into the U.S.

Wu arranged travel to China by U.S. citizens for the purpose of documenting the purported relationships with Chinese nationals, and compensated the citizens for their participation in the conspiracy.

Vang agreed to enter into a fraudulent marriage with a Chinese national in 2006, and made trips to China to facilitate fraudulent documentation of the sham relationship. Vang was offered \$20,000 for his participation in his fraudulent wife's illegal entry into the U.S., but received less than that amount.

This case was the result of an investigation by ICE, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys David M. Genrich and LeeAnn K. Bell.