



Department of Justice

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THREE-TIME FEDERAL FRAUDSTER SENTENCED TO 199 MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT

COURT IMPOSES LARGEST FRAUD AND IDENTITY THEFT SENTENCE IN DELAWARE HISTORY

WILMINGTON, DE – Charles M. Oberly, III, United States Attorney for the District of Delaware, announced today that Chief District Judge Gregory M. Sleet sentenced TODD YURGIN, age 41, to a total term of imprisonment of 199 months.

From their residence in Newark, Delaware, as well as other addresses under their direction and control, defendant YURGIN and his co-defendant JOSEPH AUGHENBAUGH engaged in a massive fraud and identity theft scheme that involved the misappropriation of the identities of more than 93 victims – at least 44 of whom were minor children. The defendants verified that the Social Security numbers were valid by using an Internet-based search program, and then applied for credit cards using the valid Social Security numbers and fictitious names.

YURGIN used the identity information to open at least 343 credit cards and 54 bank accounts from over 40 financial institutions, and formed two shell “businesses,” ostensibly operating out of the residence, to make fraudulent “purchases” for services that were never rendered. Since the “cardholders” did not exist, and the defendants did not pay the credit card companies for the fraudulent transactions, multiple financial institutions incurred significant

losses. All told, the defendants' conduct resulted in close to \$1 million in losses to various financial institutions.

YURGIN's Delaware conviction represented his third federal fraud conviction. In imposing sentence, Chief Judge Sleet called YURGIN a "professional con artist and criminal . . . whose life has been one of deception." The Court further stated that the complexity of the scheme allowed it to remain undetected; that the "scope of the fraud was wide-ranging;" and that the full extent of the scheme may never be uncovered.

United States Attorney Charles M. Oberly said of the case: "Chief Judge Sleet's sentence sends a clear message that this type of sophisticated fraud and identity theft will not be tolerated. I congratulate the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General for their tenacious efforts in bringing these career fraudsters to justice."

According to Karen V. Higgins, Inspector-In-Charge of the Philadelphia Division of the US Postal Inspection Service, "With the advancements in identity theft and mail fraud schemes, the Postal Inspection Service remains resilient in protecting the American public from the fraudsters who commit these types of crimes." Michael McGill, Special Agent in Charge, Philadelphia Field Division of the Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General, stated, "The Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General remains committed to vigorously investigating instances of Identity Theft, in particular those that involve the fraudulent use of social security numbers."

This case was investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General. For further information, contact Assistant United States Attorney Robert F. Kravetz, at 302-573-6277, x. 16406.
