



***United States Attorney
Southern District of New York***

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**WEILL MEDICAL COLLEGE OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY TO PAY OVER
\$2.6 MILLION TO SETTLE FEDERAL CIVIL FRAUD CHARGES**

LEV L. DASSIN, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that the Weill Medical College of Cornell University ("Weill Medical College") has agreed to pay \$2,606,751 to resolve civil charges that Weill Medical College defrauded the Government in connection with federal research funds awarded under grants made by the National Institutes of Health ("NIH"), a component of the United States Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS"), and the Department of Defense ("DOD"). The allegations of fraud were first brought to the attention of the Government by a whistleblower, who filed a *qui tam* Complaint under the False Claims Act.

The Government and Weill Medical College entered into the settlement in September of 2007. However, the whistleblower challenged the settlement in the fall of 2007. United States District Judge WILLIAM H. PAULEY III denied the whistleblower's challenge and approved the settlement yesterday. According to the Complaint filed in this case by the United States in Manhattan federal court:

Weill Medical College defrauded the Government and made false statements to the NIH and the DOD in connection with Weill Medical College's federal grant applications. In particular, the principal research investigator for the grants for which Weill Medical College sought funding failed to disclose to the Government the full extent of her various active research projects. These omissions deprived the Government of its ability to assess the researcher's ability to perform the projects in the grant applications. Under federal guidelines and regulations, researchers have a duty to disclose their active projects and the amount of research time they plan to devote to each project. These rules ensure that Government funds will not be awarded to a researcher who does not have adequate time to perform the project work. Weill Medical College knew, or should have known, that its

employee failed to fully disclose her active research projects in the grant applications submitted to the Government such that her research commitments exceeded 100% of her available time.

Weill Medical College, without admitting any liability or wrongdoing, agreed to pay the Government \$2,606,751 to settle the charges.

Mr. DASSIN praised the investigative work of the HHS Inspector General's Office of Investigations and the DOD Inspector General's Defense Criminal Investigative Service.

Assistant United States Attorneys SEAN C. CENAWOOD and HEATHER K. McSHAIN are in charge of the case.

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