



Department of Justice

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SEVEN MORE INDICTED IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA **ON FEDERAL FEMA FRAUD CHARGES**

BATON ROUGE, LA – United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced today that a federal grand jury returned indictments against seven more Louisiana residents on federal FEMA fraud charges.

DEBBIE FOSTER, age 34, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a two-count indictment with making false and fraudulent claims for disaster assistance benefits and with making false and fraudulent statements to FEMA. The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If convicted, FOSTER faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine per count.

KEOSHA N. MARTIN, age 24, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a three-count indictment with making false and fraudulent claims for disaster assistance benefits. The indictment alleges that from in or about October 2005, to in or about November 2005, MARTIN was employed by FEMA as an Applicant Assistant whose duties included assisting disaster victims to apply for FEMA benefits. On three separate occasions in September 2005, MARTIN filed or caused to be filed, three fraudulent claims with FEMA for disaster assistance benefits. The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If convicted, MARTIN faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine per count.

SHARON D. DALCOURT, age 45, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a one-count indictment with making false and fraudulent statements to FEMA regarding damages incurred as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Secret Service; the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If convicted, DALCOURT faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

JENNY L. LOWERY, age 22, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a two-count indictment with making false and fraudulent claims for disaster assistance benefits and with making false and fraudulent statements to FEMA. The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If convicted, LOWERY faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine per count.

DEDRICK M. JACKSON, age 22, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a two-count indictment with making false and fraudulent claims for disaster assistance benefits and with making false and fraudulent statements to FEMA. The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General; the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If convicted, JACKSON faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine per count.

WHITNEY R. PAUL, age 19, of Donaldsonville, Louisiana, was charged in a two-count indictment with making false and fraudulent claims for disaster assistance benefits and with making false and fraudulent statements to FEMA. The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If convicted, PAUL faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine per count.

DARREN O. HAYNES, age 35, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was charged in a five-count indictment with making false and fraudulent claims for disaster assistance benefits, making false and fraudulent statements to FEMA, and illegal use of a Social Security Number. The charges resulted from an investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General; the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If convicted, HAYNES faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine per count.

These individuals bring the total number of defendants who have been charged in the Middle District of Louisiana with violations related to FEMA relief funds to forty-two.

In September 2005, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, designed to deter, investigate and prosecute disaster-related federal crimes such as charity fraud, identity theft, procurement fraud and insurance fraud. The Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force – chaired by Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division – includes members from the FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the Postal Inspector's Office, and the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, among others.

For further information, contact David R. Dugas, U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana, or Lyman Thornton, First Assistant U.S. Attorney, at (225) 389-0443.

NOTE: An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until and unless she is proven guilty at trial.