



The United States Department of Justice  
United States Attorney's Office  
Western District of Louisiana

For Immediate Release  
January 17, 2013

[www.justice.gov/usao/law](http://www.justice.gov/usao/law)

Stephanie A. Finley  
United States Attorney  
(337) 262-6618  
[mona.hardwick@usdoj.gov](mailto:mona.hardwick@usdoj.gov)

**ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY AND SECRETARY  
PLEAD GUILTY TO FELONY CHARGES**

**LAFAYETTE, La.:** United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced today that Greg Williams, 44, of Lafayette, La., an Assistant District Attorney for the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, pled guilty to a one- count Bill of Information charging Williams with Conspiracy to Commit Bribery. His secretary, Denease Curry, 46, of Broussard, La., also pled guilty to a separate one-count Bill of Information charging her with Misprision of a Felony, that is, failure to report the bribery scheme.

The following admissions were made by Williams and Curry in their factual stipulations entered during the guilty plea hearings in open court before Magistrate Judge Patrick J. Hanna:

The District Attorney's Office had previously established a process by which select individuals could receive what was referred to as "immediate 894 pleas" on OWI cases. In order to qualify for the "immediate 894 plea," the charged individuals had to provide certifications at the time of the plea that they had completed all legal prerequisites, including community service, a substance abuse program, and a driver safety program. If the District Attorney authorized the "immediate 894 plea," their case was not placed on any docket, and they were allowed to plea at a time and place different than the normal OWI docket. Following the entry of the "immediate 894 plea," the judge would immediately grant the 894 motion dismissing the conviction, which served as an acquittal, thereby enabling those OWI defendants to immediately reinstate their driving privileges.

Beginning in 2010, Williams and Curry became aware that Barna Haynes, the former office administrator and secretary to the District Attorney for the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, and another individual, (hereafter referred to as co-conspirator #1) were utilizing the "immediate 894 plea" sessions to provide favorable dispositions of OWI cases for individuals who were willing to pay co-conspirator #1. Williams served as the prosecuting

attorney in all of the “immediate 894 sessions” conducted for co-conspirator #1’s “clients,” and Curry assisted in coordinating those sessions. Both Williams and Curry were aware that the individuals were paying co-conspirator #1 for being allowed to plead in the “immediate 894 sessions.” Williams and Curry also were aware that co-conspirator #1 was not licensed to practice law.

Curry was regularly contacted by Barna Haynes to help coordinate the “immediate 894 sessions.” At the request of Barna Haynes, Curry would contact the district judge’s chambers for the purpose of setting the session, give the judge’s staff the names of the OWI defendants who were to plead guilty, and obtain a date and time for the upcoming session. Curry would contact co-conspirator #1 informing him of the date and time for the “immediate 894 session.” Curry prepared the OWI files for the “immediate 894 sessions” and would regularly see and interact with co-conspirator #1. On the day of the “immediate 894 session,” co-conspirator #1 would escort his “client” to Assistant District Attorney Greg Williams’ office, and Williams would explain to the “client” what he or she could expect to occur during the “immediate 894 session.”

In 2010, co-conspirator #1 began giving gifts to Curry. That same year, Barna Haynes took an extended medical leave of absence from the District Attorney’s Office. Nevertheless, Haynes continued to coordinate the “immediate 894 sessions” for co-conspirator #1’s “clients.” Because of Haynes absence, both Haynes and co-conspirator #1 turned to Curry for additional assistance in coordinating the “immediate 894 sessions.” During this period, co-conspirator #1 began making a series of \$200 cash payments to Curry. After the initial payment from co-conspirator #1, Curry spoke to Barna Haynes of her concerns about the payment. Barna Haynes informed Curry that she was also receiving payments from co-conspirator #1. Curry received approximately eight payments from co-conspirator #1 totaling \$1,600.

In 2010 and 2011, co-conspirator #1 gave Williams a series of gifts and a cash payment as a reward for his participation in the “immediate 894 sessions.” The gifts included an autographed New Orleans Saints hat, bicycles and clothing for Williams and family members. In December 2011, co-conspirator #1 gave Williams a cash payment of \$500. This occurred in Williams’ office at the District Attorney’s Office.

At sentencing, Williams faces a term of imprisonment of up to five years, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both, and a term of supervised release of not more than three years, following confinement, and Curry faces a term of imprisonment of up to three years, a fine of up to \$250,000.00, or both, and a term of supervised release of not more than three years, following confinement. **Sentencing will be scheduled at a later date.**

U.S. Attorney Finley stated, “There is no place for this kind of activity in the criminal justice system. Both Williams and Curry were entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that justice was served as it related to the OWI cases. They grossly violated that trust. My office, along with the FBI, will continue to investigate and prosecute corruption in the Western District of Louisiana.”

Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, New Orleans Division, Michael Anderson, stated, "Given the high degree of authority and discretion of any District Attorney's Office in resolving criminal charges and the associated impacts on victims, the FBI remains fully committed to rooting out corruption that obstructs that process in any way."

For additional details regarding Williams' and Curry's guilty pleas, see attached copies of each defendant's Plea Agreement and Factual Basis.

The case is being investigated by lead agent Doug Herman, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys John Luke Walker and Richard Willis.

# # # #