



Department of Justice

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East Bernstadt Woman Sentenced to 36 Months for Identity Theft and Bank Fraud

LONDON, Ky. – Sharon Hall, 68, of East Bernstadt, Kentucky was sentenced Wednesday, in United States District Court in London, on convictions for bank fraud and aggravated identity theft. United States District Judge Gregory Van Tatenhove sentenced Hall to 24 months imprisonment, on the aggravated identity theft conviction, which will run consecutively to 12 months, on the bank fraud conviction, for a total of 36 months in federal prison.

Hall was convicted by a jury, in January, 2018. The proof at trial established that, during a period of 18 months around 2007 and 2008, Hall applied for and received student loans from at least six different lenders, in the names of her children, niece, and nephew, without their knowledge. She forged the names of the students on loan applications and altered payroll documents to defraud the banks. She received over \$93,000 on at least 11 different loans. She paid back approximately \$23,000 on the loans, before the remaining amounts were written off by the lenders, resulting in bank losses of approximately \$70,000. Hall was ordered to pay restitution to the banks and the students whose names she used.

Robert M. Duncan, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky, G. Michael Ishee, II, Assistant Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Inspector General (DOI OIG), and Edd Cole, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Inspector General, Midwest Regional Office (DOE OIG), jointly announced the sentence.

“I commend the efforts of DOI OIG and DOE OIG for jointly pursuing this investigation, which led to the defendant being held accountable for her fraudulent conduct,” said United States Attorney Duncan. “The defendant now faces the consequences of her criminal actions.”

“This verdict and sentencing are the direct result of two Federal investigative agencies working collaboratively to ensure the integrity of their designated Federal

programs and personnel,” said Assistant Special Agent in Charge Ishee. “The DOI OIG is committed to working closely with our partner OIGs, including the U.S. Department of Education OIG, on behalf of the American taxpayers. This investigation and sentencing are significant in our continued efforts to combat fraud, waste and mismanagement within the DOI.”

“Accountability applies to everyone, and this is especially true for Federal employees, as we work on behalf of the American people,” said Acting Special Agent in Charge Cole. “That’s why I’m proud of the work of OIG special agents and our law enforcement colleagues in holding Ms. Hall accountable for her criminal actions.”

The investigation was conducted by the DOI OIG and the DOE OIG and Assistant United States Attorneys Ken Taylor and Erin Roth represented the United States.

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