



**United States Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Michigan**

**Matthew Schneider
United States Attorney**

PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 29, 2020**

**Contact: Gina Balaya – (313) 226-9758
www.justice.gov/usao/mie/index.html**

**Former University of Michigan Professor Indicted
on Charges of Child Exploitation of a Minor**

DETROIT – An indictment was unsealed today charging a former University of Michigan professor with two counts of transporting a minor girl across state lines with the intent to engage in sexual conduct, announced United States Attorney Matthew Schneider.

Schneider was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Vance Callender, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

Charged was Stephen Shipps, 67, of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Shipps was arrested this morning and will be appearing in federal court for his arraignment via Zoom at 1pm today.

From 1989 to 2019, Shipps was employed by the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre, and Dance as a violin professor. Shipps was also the director of the Strings Preparatory Program, which offered instruction to young musicians ranging from elementary school through high school-age. Shipps retired from the University of Michigan in February 2019. In addition, Shipps served on the faculties of Indiana University, the North Carolina School of the Arts, the University of Nebraska – Omaha, and the Banff Centre in Canada. He also taught students at summer music programs in the Czech Republic, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

The indictment alleges that in February and March of 2002, as well as in June and July of 2002, Shipps knowingly transported a young girl, who was under 18 years old, across state lines, and Shipps intended to engage in sexual activity with her.

“We are committed to the safety and well-being of the most vulnerable members of our society – our children,” stated United States Attorney Matthew Schneider. “For over 20 years, Stephen Shipps had close interactions with many young girls who were gifted musicians. Shipps met with these young girls both inside and outside of the State of Michigan. Our determination and commitment to seeking justice for victims has no time limit.”

“Thanks to the bravery of Shipps’ alleged victims and painstaking investigative work by HSI, this disgraced professor is being held accountable for coercing vulnerable young women into sex, in some cases in the distant past,” said Vance Callender, HSI Special Agent in Charge of Michigan and Ohio. “This case underscores HSI’s commitment to pursue sexual predators and bring some measure of justice to the victims.”

If convicted of both counts, Shipps faces a statutory maximum penalty of 15 years in federal prison.

An indictment is merely a charge and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant in this case is presumed innocent. The burden is on the government to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

This case is being investigated by agents of HSI with the assistance of the University of Michigan Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Sara Woodward is prosecuting this case.

The investigation into this case is ongoing. We are asking for the public’s help to fully investigate this case. Anyone with any additional information about alleged crimes committed by Stephen Shipps is asked to call the Tip Line that has been set up by the Department of Homeland Security. That number is 866-DHS-TIPS.(866-347-2423). Tips can also be emailed to HSI-Shipps-Investigation@ice.dhs.gov

To hear prepared remarks from United States Attorney Matthew Schneider and Special Agent in Charge Vance Callender visit:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XMksx75J9M&feature=youtu.be>