

U. S. Department of Justice

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FORMER FLORIDA PREPAID COLLEGE PROGRAM CONTRACTOR SENTENCED TO 33 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR CONSPIRACY, MAIL FRAUD, AND AGGRAVATED IDENTITY THEFT

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA – Jamilla Ciar Hall of Tallahassee, Florida, has been sentenced to 33 months in federal prison after pleading guilty to conspiracy to commit mail fraud, and aggravated identity theft arising out of her work with the Florida Prepaid College Program. Lawrence Keefe, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida, announced the sentence, which was handed down on Tuesday following Hall's guilty plea last September.

"This woman abused her position of trust to rob money from the Florida Prepaid program – but worse, she robbed from unsuspecting parents who invested in a future college education for their loved ones," U.S. Attorney Keefe said. "She thought she had discovered a path to easy money, but instead, choosing that path has led her to prison."

The Florida Prepaid College Board, which administers the Florida Prepaid College Program ("Florida Prepaid"), contracted with Intuition College Savings Solutions to provide customer service and records administration services for Florida Prepaid. While working for Intuition, between July and December 2018 Hall accessed the personal identification information of Florida Prepaid account owners and beneficiaries, and then fraudulently changed mailing addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses associated with those Florida Prepaid plans. She then fraudulently submitted forms to cancel accounts, using the personal identification information of the account owners and beneficiaries. Refund checks for the Florida Prepaid plans she cancelled were mailed and delivered by the United States Postal Service to Hall at the addresses she fraudulently submitted. She personally cashed some of the refund checks and gave some to others to fraudulently cash. In total, Hall fraudulently obtained and attempted to obtain approximately \$42,000 in funds to which she was not entitled.

"Hall took advantage of hardworking families that utilize the Florida Prepaid program to provide their children an opportunity for a college education," said FDLE's Tallahassee Regional Operations Center Special Agent in Charge Mark Perez. "Hall's arrest and sentencing assures families that the Florida Prepaid program is a safe and secure way to save for their children's future. Those that take advantage of these families will be brought to justice."

Hall pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud, five counts of mail fraud, and one count of aggravated identity theft. Her 33-month prison sentence will be followed by 3 years of supervised release. Hall was also ordered to pay restitution to the victims.

"Tuesday's sentencing is a reminder that financial crimes are not victimless crimes," said United States Secret Service Resident Special Agent in Charge Seth Reister, Tallahassee. "The defendant victimized the community for her own personal gain by taking advantage of multiple Florida Prepaid customers. The U.S. Secret Service and its law enforcement partners such as the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, will continue to investigate and pursue prosecution of those who engage in identity theft or financial fraud."

This sentencing was the result of a joint investigation by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the United States Secret Service. Assistant United States Attorney Justin M. Keen prosecuted the case.

The United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Florida is one of 94 offices that serve as the nation's principal litigators under the direction of the Attorney General. To access public court documents online, please visit the <u>U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida</u> website. For more information about the United States Attorney's Office, Northern District of Florida, visit http://www.justice.gov/usao/fln/index.html.