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**FORMER POST OFFICE MANAGER SENTENCED IN BRIBE SCHEME**

*Station Manager Received Bribes for Inflated Invoices for Landscaping and Cleaning Services*

**Baltimore**, Maryland – U.S. District Judge Ellen L. Hollander sentenced former U.S. Postal Service station manager Richard Lewis Wright, III, age 47, of Baltimore, today to 40 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release for bribery in connection with a scheme to obtain U.S. Postal Service contracts in exchange for bribe payments. Judge Hollander also entered an order that Wright forfeit and pay restitution of \$501,791.

The sentence was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Special Agent in Charge Paul Bowman of the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General; and Special Agent in Charge Stephen E. Vogt of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

According to his plea agreement and court documents, Wright was the USPS station manager of the Waverly Station in Baltimore. Co-defendant Kimberly Parnell was the USPS station manager of the Pikesville Station in Pikesville, Maryland. As a station manager, Wright and Parnell had authority to contract for landscaping, snow removal and cleaning services at the post offices they managed, and bill those services to USPS for payment.

Beginning in 2007 for Wright and 2010 for Parnell, and continuing until July 2013, Wright and Parnell created, approved and submitted inflated invoices for maintenance work allegedly performed at their post offices. They split the proceeds with the providers of the services, including Shane Anderson and others.

For example, Wright and Parnell initially accepted bribes from a co-conspirator who owned a landscaping company. In July 2013, after becoming increasingly frustrated with the co-conspirator's slow payment of bribes, Parnell recruited Shane Anderson, who operated a landscaping company in Baltimore called Youthful Minds Lawn Care. The co-conspirators agreed that Wright and Parnell would submit inflated invoices from Youthful Minds Lawn Care for landscaping services in exchange for a percentage of the proceeds paid to Youthful Minds by the USPS.

Similarly, beginning in August 2010, Wright also solicited and received bribes from Ladeena Sketers-Anderson, who operated Keep U Clean cleaning service. Sketers-Anderson received USPS payments, approved by Wright for services allegedly provided at Wright's Post Office. Sketers-Anderson then issued checks to a cleaning company owned by Wright, which Wright cashed.

In all, Wright submitted \$591,791 worth of invoices in exchange for bribes.

Kimberly A. Parnell, age 44, and Shane Anderson, age 38, both of Baltimore, and Ladena D. Sketers-Anderson, age 47, of Randallstown, Maryland, previously pleaded guilty to their roles in the scheme. Parnell, who admitted to submitting \$50,470 worth of invoices in exchange for bribe payments, was sentenced to 20 months in prison. Both Shane Anderson and Ladena Sketers-Anderson were sentenced to 15 months in prison.

The National Procurement Fraud Task Force was formed in October 2006 to promote the early detection, identification, prevention and prosecution of procurement fraud associated with the increase in government contracting activity for national security and other government programs. The Procurement Fraud Task Force includes the United States Attorneys' Offices, the FBI, the U.S. Inspectors General community and a number of other federal law enforcement agencies. This case, as well as other cases brought by members of the Task Force, demonstrates the Department of Justice's commitment to helping ensure the integrity of the government procurement process.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the USPS-Office of Inspector General and FBI for their work in the investigation. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant United States Attorney Leo J. Wise, who prosecuted the case.