

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Connecticut

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 17, 2018

Bridgeport Man Sentenced to 30 Months in Prison for Stolen Postal Money Order and Check Fraud Scheme

John H. Durham, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, today announced that BERNARD HARRIS, 33, of Bridgeport, was sentenced yesterday by U.S. District Judge Janet Bond Arterton in New Haven to 30 months of imprisonment, followed by three years of supervised release, for participating in two fraud schemes.

According to court documents and statements made in court, the first scheme involved the theft of postal money orders. Marc Anthony Alexander, formerly of Stratford and Oxford, and his wife, Rachael Alexander, also known as Rachael Vierling, devised a scheme to steal blocks of blank postal money orders from the U.S. Post Office in Old Greenwich. The Alexanders and others then imprinted the money orders with various denominations using a computer font designed to make them appear to be authentic. The Alexanders recruited HARRIS into the scheme to organize others to cash the money orders, or deposit them into numerous bank accounts, either at an ATM or at a teller window. HARRIS recruited at least five individuals and paid them a portion of the proceeds. He then turned the bulk of the money over to the Alexanders. The Alexanders compensated HARRIS by giving him additional money orders that he cashed and converted to his own use.

The loss from this scheme was \$313,570.

HARRIS, Marc Alexander and Rachael Alexander were charged by indictment and arrested on April 26, 2016. On September 8, 2016, HARRIS pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

On December 30, 2016, while he was released on bond, HARRIS went to a Waterbury check cashing business and presented a \$3860 check that was allegedly issued by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families. HARRIS provided his driver's license as identification and provided two

references, including the name of his federal pretrial services officer and his federal public defender. He also cashed a second check from DCF.

On May 8, 2017, HARRIS pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud stemming from the fraudulent check scheme and was remanded into custody.

Marc and Rachael Alexander pleaded guilty to charges related to the postal money order scheme and a separate scheme that involved the fraudulent sale of financed vehicles. On April 11, 2017, Marc Alexander was sentenced to 96 months of imprisonment. Rachael Alexander awaits sentencing.

This investigation has been conducted by the Connecticut Financial Crimes Task Force, U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, U.S. Secret Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Westport Police Department and Greenwich Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ray Miller.

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