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Former Major at Angola Prison Convicted of Beating a Handcuffed and Shackled Inmate

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Daniel Davis, 41, a former Major at Louisiana State Penitentiary (LSP) in Angola, Louisiana, was found guilty by a jury today in federal court for beating an inmate who was handcuffed, shackled, and not resisting. In a previous trial in January, Major Davis [was convicted](#) of conspiring with other officers to cover up the beating by devising a false cover story, submitting false reports documenting that cover story, tampering with witnesses, and lying under oath. Four other officers—former Captains James Savoy, John Sanders, and Scotty Kennedy, and former Sergeant Willie Thomas—have all previously pleaded guilty for their roles in the beating and cover up. At Davis’s trial, Captains Sanders and Kennedy testified for the government and described the abuse and the extensive cover up.

After hearing testimony over the course of three days, the jury convicted Davis of willfully depriving the inmate of his right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment. The evidence showed that Davis initiated the beating by yanking the inmate’s leg chains, causing the inmate to fall face-first onto the concrete breezeway. At that point, Davis and the other officers punched, kicked, and

stomped on the inmate, leaving the inmate with a bloody gash under his eye, a dislocated shoulder, broken ribs, and a collapsed lung.

“Mr. Davis abused the justice system by beating an inmate, writing false reports, and using his influence and power as a corrections officer to encourage others to lie,” said Assistant Attorney General Eric Dreiband of the Civil Rights Division. “The Justice Department will continue to prosecute correctional officers who violate federal criminal law.”

“Our office is committed to protecting the civil rights of all citizens and ensuring that government employees in positions of authority don’t abuse that authority,” said U.S. Attorney Brandon J. Fremin. “I want to thank the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, the FBI, and the Louisiana Office of Inspector General for their work on this matter. “

"Charged with protecting the civil rights of others, to include those in custody, is a responsibility the FBI takes very seriously," said Eric J. Rommal, FBI New Orleans Special Agent in Charge. "Law enforcement officers and correctional officers acting under the color of law must ensure a person's civil rights are not violated. The jury's decision today reinforces the FBI's commitment that civil rights and color of law violations will not be tolerated."

“Corrections officers are given great authority and power in our system because public safety depends on them doing their jobs well,” said Louisiana Inspector General Stephen Street. “When those corrections officers commit crimes by choosing to abuse their power, as defendant Davis did in this case, they must be held accountable, or public trust in the system suffers. The jury’s guilty

verdict should send a clear message that we have zero tolerance for it and will continue to aggressively pursue these cases whenever and wherever they may arise. I wish to thank the FBI, United States Attorney Brandon Fremin and the prosecutors from the DOJ Civil Rights Division for their outstanding work on this case.”

No date has been set for Davis’s sentencing. He faces a maximum penalty of five years of imprisonment on the conspiracy and perjury counts, 10 years of imprisonment on the excessive force count, and 20 years of imprisonment on each of the remaining obstruction counts.

This case was investigated by the FBI’s Baton Rouge Resident Agency Office and the Louisiana Office of the State Inspector General. The case was tried by Trial Attorneys Christopher J. Perras and Zachary Dembo of the Civil Rights Division’s Criminal Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Frederick A. Menner, Jr., of the Middle District of Louisiana.