

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
MIDDLE DISTRICT *of* LOUISIANA

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, June 23, 2017

## **School Owner and Ceo Convicted of Federal Financial Aid Fraud Offenses and Money Laundering**

BATON ROUGE, LA – Acting United States Attorney Corey R. Amundson announced today that a federal jury has convicted **ALDEN HALL**, age 58, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, of numerous federal offenses in connection with her multi-year scheme to defraud the United States Department of Education and steal Pell Grant funds. Earlier this afternoon, after a four-day trial, the jury unanimously returned guilty verdicts on all five counts presented at trial, including three counts of theft of government funds, one count of fraudulently obtaining financial assistance funds, and one count of money laundering. **HALL** is scheduled to be sentenced on November 30, 2017.

At all relevant times, **HALL** was the owner and Chief Executive Officer of Alden's School of Cosmetology and Alden's School of Barbering in Baker, Louisiana. As the evidence demonstrated, **HALL** engaged in a scheme to steal government funds by causing misrepresentations to be submitted to the Department of Education. For instance, **HALL** represented to the Department that certain students were enrolled in Pell Grant-approved programs of instruction when **HALL** knew that they were actually in programs of instruction that did not qualify for Pell Grants. **HALL** caused false and forged documents to be submitted as part of certain students' financial aid packages, and caused misrepresentations to the Department about the number of hours that certain students had attended class and their standing at the school, when in fact the individuals had never attended class. Through the scheme, **HALL** and her businesses fraudulently received more than \$100,000 in federal funds. Finally, in December of 2011, as proceeds were being generated from **HALL's** fraudulent scheme, she engaged in money laundering by transferring criminally derived property of a value greater than \$10,000 from a bank account to a check issued to herself.

Acting U.S. Attorney Corey Amundson stated, "This defendant, and others who would steal from government programs intended to help those in need, must be held accountable for their crimes. Today's verdict does just that. I greatly appreciate the hard work of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Inspector General, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigations Division, the Louisiana Office of Inspector General, and the prosecutors in this office in uncovering this defendant's fraudulent scheme and securing the defendant's conviction today."

Louisiana State Inspector General Stephen Street commented, "We have zero tolerance for those who defraud government programs, and will continue to make pursuing these criminal cases a top priority."

This matter is being handled by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Louisiana and the U.S. Department of Education – Office of the Inspector General, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Louisiana Office of Inspector General. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Ryan Crosswell and Jessica M.P. Thornhill.

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**Component(s):**

USAO - Louisiana, Middle

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