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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**State Inspector General Finds Delgado Issued Contracts to Teach
Phantom Students**

BATON ROUGE -- Today, the State Inspector General's Office in Baton Rouge issued a report detailing its investigation into certain activities at Delgado Community College School of Allied Health in New Orleans. The investigation revealed that Gay Dawson, an instructor in the Delgado Community College School of Allied Health in New Orleans, received contracts and accepted compensation to teach six classes that she did not teach. She did so with the knowledge and approval of her supervisor, Debbie Kern, who initiated the creation of the contracts. Between the summer semester of 2009 and fall semester of 2010, Ms. Dawson received \$6,000 to teach six classes. However, by her own admission, she taught only two students in all of the classes for which she had contracts.

Both Ms. Dawson and Ms. Kern justified Ms. Dawson's compensation under the contracts by claiming that Ms. Dawson performed extra duties in previous semesters for which she was not paid, such as working extra hours, leading a members' fitness class, and writing a fitness manual. Ms. Dawson, however, is a part-time employee restricted to a maximum of 30 hours per week. According to Delgado officials, Ms. Dawson should not have been paid for

work performed in previous semesters through subsequent teaching contracts. If she performed extra work, she should have been compensated contemporaneously at her normal hourly rate.

At the beginning of our investigation, we found that employees of the Delgado Fitness Centers were paid an hourly wage while simultaneously performing work for which they were being compensated through teaching contracts. After we launched our investigation, Delgado management discontinued this practice.

It is the practice of the Delgado School of Allied Health to allow employees to sign time sheets and employment contracts for other employees. We found during our investigation that this practice eroded accountability and created opportunities for individuals to deny responsibility when questions were raised.

The fitness center that Delgado operates at its Charity School of Nursing in downtown New Orleans averages a daily attendance of less than five people, while the fitness center at its main campus, also in New Orleans, averages nearly 100 per day. The cost to staff the Charity Fitness Center during the time period of our review was \$33,264. When weighing that payroll cost against the low attendance, we questioned whether such an expenditure is a prudent use of public funds.

Inspector General Stephen Street said: "Every dollar is important to the taxpayers of Louisiana, and it appears that, as a result of our investigation, Delgado has already instituted changes that will help to prevent such waste in the future."

To obtain the full report, follow this link:

<http://oig.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/reports/CID-11-010.pdf>