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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former Major at Angola Prison Convicted of Federal Obstruction Offenses in Connection with Beating of Handcuffed and Shackled Inmate

A former Major at Louisiana State Penitentiary (LSP) in Angola, Louisiana, was found guilty Friday in federal court for conspiring to cover up the beating of a handcuffed and shackled inmate, and for writing a false report, falsifying official records, and lying under oath about what happened.

After four days of trial, a jury convicted Daniel Davis, 41, of Loranger, Louisiana, on four charges related to the cover up. The jury heard evidence that Davis and three other supervisory officers used excessive force against an inmate who was shackled and handcuffed. The other three officers -- former Captains James Savoy, 39, John Sanders, 30, and Scotty Kennedy, 49 -- had all previously pleaded guilty to various federal charges related to the beating and the conspiracy to cover it up. At Davis's trial, two of the Captains testified for the government and described the abuse and the extensive obstruction of justice.

After hearing testimony over the course of four days, the jury convicted Davis on all four counts related to the cover up of the beating. The evidence showed that Davis and the other officers conspired to cover up an incident in which officers had repeatedly punched, kicked, and stomped an inmate, causing serious injury including a bloody gash under his eye, a dislocated shoulder, broken ribs, and a collapsed lung. The extensive cover up included lying to investigators, writing false reports, and fabricating prison documents to provide a false alibi for some of the participants.

The jury convicted Davis of conspiring with other officers to obstruct justice; obstructing justice by writing a false report; obstructing justice by corruptly persuading his subordinates to lie; and committing perjury by lying under oath in a federal civil deposition. The jury acquitted Davis on one charge of violating the rights of the inmate by beating him, and failed to reach a unanimous verdict on a second charge related to the beating. The government has not announced whether it intends to re-try the defendant on the count for which there was no verdict.

"As a Major at Angola, defendant Davis had been entrusted with great power, which he grossly abused by perverting the justice system by lying, writing false reports, and using his influence to encourage others to lie," said Acting Assistant Attorney General John Gore of the Civil Rights Division. "The Justice Department

will continue to vigorously prosecute correctional officers who violate the public's trust by committing crimes and to covering up violations of federal criminal law.”

Acting U.S. Attorney Corey R. Amundson said, “Although most corrections officers are good and honest public servants doing an enormously challenging and important job, Defendant Davis chose instead to become a criminal himself. His actions were unjustifiable, intolerable, and criminal. Our office remains steadfast in holding accountable those who violate the federal criminal civil rights laws and this prosecution of four high-ranking Angola corrections officers should illustrate that point very clearly. I greatly appreciate the dedication and hard work of the FBI and the prosecutors from my office and the Civil Rights Division who handled this important matter.”

“It is especially disheartening when those entrusted with power and authority in our criminal justice system choose to violate that trust,” said Louisiana Inspector General Stephen Street. “It is outrageous and threatens the integrity of the system. The Louisiana OIG remains committed to working with the U.S. Department of Justice, the FBI and all of our state and local law enforcement partners to root out this sort of corruption wherever it may exist, and these successful criminal prosecutions of four Louisiana Department of Corrections officers are the latest demonstration of that. I wish to thank Acting United States Attorney Corey Amundson and his staff, as well as the prosecutors from the DOJ Civil Rights Division, for an outstanding job presenting the case.”

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

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