

# Former Bossier Parish Community College Comptroller Sentenced for Stealing More Than \$280,000

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Western District of Louisiana

**SHREVEPORT, La. - Carol Bates**, the former comptroller for Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC), was sentenced today for conspiracy to commit wire fraud, announced Acting United States Attorney Alexander C. Van Hook. Chief U.S. District Judge S. Maurice Hicks, Jr. sentenced Bates, 50, of Shreveport, Louisiana, to 60 months (5 years) in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release. Bates was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$286,987.08.

Bates and her co-defendants, Faith Alexander, Marquise Perry, and Audrey Williams, all of Shreveport, were indicted on September 25, 2019 and charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud.

Bates pleaded guilty on July 20, 2020 and at the hearing admitted that from 2013 to 2016, she used her position as comptroller of BPCC to access an internal BPCC computer database and make entries falsely showing individuals were due refunds by the school. These individuals were not qualified to receive the funds, and, in most cases, they were not even attending BPCC during the semesters they received the money. As a part of the scheme, Bates and her sister, Audrey Williams, recruited Faith Alexander and Marquise Perry, along with seven other

individuals to receive fraudulent refunds from BPCC. Once the individual received the funds, they were instructed to deliver between one-half and two-thirds of the money to Carol Bates or her sister, Audrey Williams.

In total, Bates caused 45 fraudulent refunds totaling \$286,987.08 to be issued to nine individuals. Alexander received eight refunds totaling \$45,482.65 from 2014 through 2016. Perry received seven refunds totaling \$49,524.65 from 2015 through 2016. The remaining 30 refunds were issued to seven other individuals who, after receiving the money, transferred two-thirds or half of it to Bates.

Acting United States Attorney Alexander C. Van Hook stated: "Those who work in places of trust in business such as the comptroller position held by this defendant, are held to a higher standard of accountability. This defendant failed in that regard and instead selfishly stole hundreds of thousands of dollars for her own personal gain. Our office will be vigilant in continuing to investigate this, and any other type of fraud, in the Western District of Louisiana."

"Abuse of high trust is among the worst things a public employee can do," stated Louisiana Inspector General Stephen Street. "Ms. Bates engaged in a deliberate and complex scheme to steal hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars from an institution of higher learning, with no regard for the significant harm it would cause. The substantial prison sentence imposed by the court today is entirely proper, and will hopefully send the message to anyone else who might consider stealing from the public – we have zero tolerance for it and will do everything we can to send you to jail."

"I want to thank Acting U.S. Attorney Alexander Van Hook and his staff

for an excellent job on the case, as well as our partners at the U.S. Department of Education Inspector General."

**Marquise Perry**, 36, pleaded guilty on December 9, 2019 and was sentenced on December 11, 2020 to 5 years of supervised probation. Perry was also ordered to pay \$49,524.65 in restitution.

The sentencing hearing for Faith Alexander is scheduled for March 22, 2021 at 10:00. The sentencing hearing for Audrey Williams has not yet been set.

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Inspector General, and the Louisiana Office of State Inspector General, conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Seth D. Reeg prosecuted the case.

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