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FORMER GEORGIA LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGER CHARGED WITH TWO COUNTS OF THEFT FROM A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAM

Savannah, GA: In a May 21, 2018, Press Release United States Attorney Bobby L. Christine, Southern District of Georgia, cited that “Attorney General Jeff Sessions and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex M. Azar III, announced today the largest ever health care fraud enforcement action by the Medicare Fraud Strike Force.”

Amongst other cases prosecuted by the Southern District of Georgia, cited in the Press Release, Christine stated that “In Statesboro, the United States charged Evelyn Gay by criminal information with two counts of theft from a program receiving federal funds. According to the information, Gay fraudulently obtained and misapplied over \$79,000 belonging to the Georgia Legal Services Program (GLSP) and Aging & Disability Advocacy Group, Inc. (ADAG), both of which receive federal funds through grant programs offered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.”

In 2012, HHS created the Administration for Community Living to support people with disabilities and older adults who wish to remain at home, but need basic assistance. In Georgia, federal grants support a number of sub-grantee organizations dedicated to this mission, including GLSP and ADAG.

During the period covered by the information, Gay, a 35-year employee of GLSP, acted as a Program Manager whose responsibilities included counseling seniors to prevent Medicare, Medicaid, and other health care fraud and abuse, as well as counseling seniors about identity theft. Gay also served as an agent of ADAG through her position as Vice President and Treasurer. Gay’s responsibilities with ADAG included coordinating volunteer interns to assist seniors with a variety of daily needs and managing the finances of the organization.

The investigation found that Gay submitted false travel claims for the volunteers and interns and then deposited the reimbursement checks into her personal bank account. The individuals to whom the reimbursement checks were written had no knowledge that the travel claims had been filed in their name or that the reimbursement checks had been cashed and the funds retained by Gay.

In a statement issued by Jeffrey E. Schanz, Inspector General of the LSC, Office of Inspector General, he stated “We hope the prosecution of Evelyn Gay offers a strong deterrent to others contemplating stealing funds from the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) that are intended to provide much needed legal services to an underprivileged population. We appreciate the leadership offered by the U.S Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Georgia in prosecuting individuals who steal funds meant to serve the civil legal needs of the poor in our country.”

This case was investigated by the Legal Services Corporation, Office of Inspector General, and the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General. The United States was represented by Assistant United States Attorneys J. Thomas Clarkson and Jonathan Porter.