



Department of Justice

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**FORMER ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AMERICAN SAMOA NON-PROFIT
LEGAL AID CORPORATION SENTENCED FOR ROLE IN THEFT OF FEDERAL
GRANT FUNDS**

Funds Intended to Benefit Low-Income Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse

WASHINGTON – David Wagner, 49, was sentenced today in St. Louis to five months in prison for his role in the theft of nearly \$160,000 in federal grant funds from a now-defunct non-profit American Samoa legal services corporation, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division.

U.S. District Judge Carol E. Jackson for the Eastern District of Missouri also ordered Wagner to serve three years of supervised release following his prison term. In addition, Judge Jackson ordered him to pay \$31,292 in restitution, jointly and severally with Julie and Andrea Matau, two other individuals who have been convicted and sentenced as part of this investigation.

On March 11, 2010, Wagner pleaded guilty to theft of federal funds for his role in scheme. On Dec. 21, 2011, in the Northern District of California Julie Matau pleaded guilty to wire fraud and Andrea Matau pleaded guilty to misdemeanor theft of federal funds.

The case against Wagner and the Mataus arose from allegations of theft and fraud at a now-defunct non-profit legal services corporation in American Samoa called the U'una'i Legal Services Corporation (ULSC). According to court documents, between 1998 and 2007, ULSC was the only non-profit organization in American Samoa that was dedicated to providing free legal services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and sexual abuse.

Between August 2005 and September 2007, ULSC received more than \$1.2 million in federal grant funds from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women and the Legal Services Corporation.

According to court documents, between May 2005 and September 2007, Wagner served as ULSC's acting executive director and Julie Matau served as ULSC's office manager and grant administrator. Wagner was responsible for overseeing all aspects of ULSC's work, including the administration of ULSC's federal grants. Wagner and Julie Matau exercised joint signatory authority over ULSC's bank accounts. Andrea Matau worked as one of ULSC's legal assistants and reported directly to Julie Matau.

In his guilty plea, Wagner admitted that he signed blank ULSC checks for Julie Matau's use in exchange for unlawful payments that she provided to him. According to court documents, between September 2005 and September 2007, Wagner unlawfully received \$31,292 in federal grant funds; Julie Matau unlawfully received \$65,649 in federal grant funds; Andrea Matau unlawfully received \$24,634 in federal grant funds; and the Mataus' relatives received \$38,188 in federal grant funds.

In her guilty plea, Julie Matau admitted that she knew that they had no legal entitlement to receive these federal grant funds and that their receipt of the federal funds violated the terms and conditions of the grants. In her guilty plea, Andrea Matau admitted that she participated in the theft by personally receiving \$24,634 in unlawful payments and by permitting Julie Matau to deposit additional unlawful payments in Andrea Matau's personal bank account and in their joint bank account.

On March 27, 2012, U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilken for the Northern District of California sentenced Julie Matau to 12 months and one day in prison. Julie Matau also was ordered to serve three years of supervised release, including eight hours a week of community service throughout the three-year term. Judge Wilken sentenced Andrea Matau to serve 12 months of probation, including six months of home detention. Andrea Matau also was ordered to provide eight hours a week of community service for the entire 12 months of probation. Judge Wilken ordered Julie and Andrea Matau to pay \$159,763 in restitution, to be paid jointly and severally. In addition, Judge Wilken ordered that \$31,292 of the \$159,763 be paid jointly and severally with David Wagner.

The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorneys Edward J. Loya Jr. and Monique T. Abrishami of the Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section. Senior Trial Attorney Mary K. Butler and Trial Attorney Maria N. Lerner, also of the Public Integrity Section, participated in the investigation of this matter. The case is being investigated by special agents of the Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General and the Legal Services Corporation's Office of Inspector General, with assistance from special agents of the FBI-Honolulu Division, American Samoa Resident Agency.

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