



U.S. Department of Justice

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## PRESS RELEASE

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**Public Affairs**

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### **Former Court Security Officer found guilty of fraud**

**Washington, D.C.** - Nelson S. Brockenborrough, a former Court Security Officer at the D.C. Superior Court, was found guilty today of conspiracy and wire fraud in connection with a scheme to acquire real estate, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor announced.

Brockenborrough, 55, of Mitchellville, Maryland, was found guilty by a jury sitting in U.S. District Court before the Honorable Gladys Kessler. The defendant faces a maximum prison term of twenty (20) years and a fine of \$250,000 on each count, when he is sentenced on February 14, 2008.

The charges stem from the defendant's attempt to acquire a house and land, in 2005, located one block from the then-new Washington Convention Center. Brockenborrough and a co-defendant who previously pleaded guilty, conspired to defraud the heirs of a Maryland man who had died a year earlier, by forging his name on a deed to the property. With the help of two clerks from the D.C. Superior Court, who have also pleaded guilty, co-conspirator Denise McLeod of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, filed the deed with the D.C. Recorder of Deeds. McLeod and Brockenborrough then proceeded to illegally evict tenants who had lived there for several years, as well as squatters who had moved in after the landlord's death.

When Brockenborrough and McLeod immediately tried to re-sell the property, the forgery of the deed was discovered in a title search, but they still wanted to acquire the property, so they began negotiations with the heirs to the house, and used numerous misrepresentations about the value and condition of the property to convince them to agree to a fraudulently depressed price. In addition, the defendant, who is a retired policeman from the Metropolitan Police Department and was then a Court Security Officer, pressured the heirs by claiming that he was using his influence in the law enforcement community to prevent vandalism to the property -- influence he threatened to withdraw if they didn't sell to him.

Throughout the negotiations, the co-conspirators were unaware that the heirs to the property had also discovered the forged deed and had reported it to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. As a result, the fraudulent negotiations were recorded by the FBI, producing the

evidence that was presented to the jury at trial.

The jury deliberated over three days, delivering a guilty verdict on the conspiracy count on October 30, 2007, and on the wire fraud count today. The defendant was acquitted of three counts charged under the D.C. Code, including fraud, forgery and uttering.

In announcing today's verdict, U.S. Attorney Taylor praised the efforts of FBI Special Agent Charles Price, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Barbara E. Kittay and Aaron Mendelsohn, who prosecuted the case.

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