



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Stephen R. Wigginton
Southern District of Illinois

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2012
WWW.JUSTICE.GOV/USAO/ILS/

CONTACT: James L. Porter
PHONE: (618) 628-3700

FORMER HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE CONVICTED OF STEALING PATIENT IDENTITIES FOR PERSONAL GAIN

Stephen R. Wigginton, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that Susan L. Harris, 28, of Belleville, Illinois, was convicted of aggravated identity theft and conspiracy to commit mail fraud following a jury trial in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois, East St. Louis Division.

Evidence presented during the two-day jury trial showed that Harris, who was at one time a medical assistant at a Southern Illinois hospital, conspired with co-defendant Ashley Drummond to steal personal identifying information of patients from the hospital in order to attempt to open credit cards in the patients' names. Drummond transported patients at the hospital and would steal their personal information from their charts. The pair targeted elderly patients. Drummond, who pleaded guilty to her role in the offense on November 19, 2012, testified that, after stealing the information, she would call Harris to discuss which accounts to apply for with which information. Harris was later caught on camera by a retail store using one of the credit cards obtained with the victim information. The evidence showed that the credit card she was caught using was mailed to Harris' home and activated with her cell phone. It was obtained with personal information belonging to a 90-year-old woman who lived in an assisted living center.

"As citizens, we must be able to rely on our personal information being safe and secure. To all those who consider stealing personal information, I have this warning – the Southern District of Illinois has established a very tough Identity Theft Task Force. With this force and other law enforcement partners, I will continue to vigorously investigate and prosecute identity thieves, regardless of the financial loss," said U.S. Attorney Wigginton.

At sentencing, on the charge of conspiracy to commit mail fraud, Harris faces up to 20 years of imprisonment, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both; a term of supervised release of up to 3 years, and a \$100 special assessment. Aggravated Identity Theft is punishable by a mandatory 2 year term of imprisonment consecutive to any other sentence imposed, up to 1 year of supervised release, and a \$100 special assessment. Sentencing for Harris is set for March 25, 2013.

This case was investigated by the Southern District of Illinois Identity Theft Task Force, the United States Postal Inspection Service, the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, the Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General, the Maryville Police Department and the Collinsville Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Katherine L. Lewis and Assistant United States Attorney Michael J. Quinley.

If you think that you might be a victim of identity theft, contact the Southern District of Illinois Identity Theft Task Force at 618-410-6918.

###