



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney John W. Vaudreuil  
Western District of Wisconsin

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
NOVEMBER 30, 2010  
WWW.USDOJ.GOV/USAO/WIW

CONTACT: RITA M. RUMBELOW  
PHONE: (608) 264-5158  
TTY: (608) 264-5006

## MAN SENTENCED FOR STUDENT LOAN FRAUD

Madison, Wis. - John W. Vaudreuil, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Ernest Kwasi Bankas, 56, a naturalized citizen of the United States originally from Ghana, who was living in Sachse, Texas, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to two years in prison, without the possibility of parole, for fraudulently obtaining student loan funds. Bankas pleaded guilty to this charge on September 17, 2010. Bankas was also ordered to pay \$340,000 in restitution to the U.S. Department of Education.

Bankas' fraud was detected in 2005 by the Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation (GLHEC) when they began audits of students studying abroad. Officials of GLHEC called the Department of Education to investigate when it learned that Bankas had already graduated from the University of Durham in England, yet he forged documents to continue to obtain loans, claiming he was still attending the University of Durham. Over the course of several years Bankas had also defaulted on several loans and used several social security numbers to obtain loans.

The charges against Bankas were the result of an investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Inspector General. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rita M. Rumbelow.

###