

## U.S. Attorney's Report to the District

Prosecuting complex frauds and other white collar crimes is one of the things that this office does best. We prosecute a wide variety of sophisticated criminal schemes, and those cases often involve skilled and highly educated defendants such as accountants, bankers, doctors, and members of our own profession.

Attorneys can do tremendous good for society -- seeking justice for their clients, righting wrongs, supporting the weak against the strong, defending the environment. But a license to practice law can also be put to more nefarious use. Lawyers can use their experience and expertise to implement difficult-to-detect offenses, to aid and conceal criminal conduct, and to give a veneer of legitimacy to fraud schemes. We have not been reluctant to hold attorneys accountable for such conduct.

Earlier this month, attorney Derian Eidson was sentenced to over ten years in prison for her role in a major bankruptcy fraud scheme. She allowed a debtor to use a shell company to launder money, and later attempted to negotiate a bogus settlement agreement to launder \$4 million in proceeds of bankruptcy fraud. Last month, El Dorado Hills attorney Donald Wanland was sentenced to nearly four years in prison after being convicted of tax evasion. Another attorney, Douglas Memmott of Willows, who was convicted late last year of tax evasion, is due to be sentenced soon. In August, Placer County lawyer Erica Arceo will be sentenced for her role in assisting in a Ponzi scheme that took in \$36 million from nearly 200 victims. Elk Grove attorney Sean Patrick Gjerde is serving a two and a half year sentence for facilitating a mortgage fraud scheme. It is likely that another attorney will be charged in this district with fraud offenses in the very near future. In addition to prison time and fines, attorneys convicted of federal felonies face automatic suspension from the state bar, and further disciplinary proceedings that can lead to disbarment.

Attorneys are officers of the court who are sworn to uphold the laws of the State of California and the United States. As U.S. District Court Judge Troy L. Nunley stated during the sentencing of Derian Eidson earlier this month, those who betray that trust should expect no leniency as white collar defendants, or on account of their profession. Indeed, the use of a bar license to commit federal crimes is particularly deserving of censure.

If you would like to communicate with our office, contact the main number in Sacramento, or submit a suggestion by clicking on the button below. Thank you.

United States Attorney

*Benjamin B. Wagner*