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EX-PHARMACIST IS SENTENCED FOR PRESCRIPTION FRAUD

Owner of Grand Coteau Pharmacy Filled Prescriptions for Illegal Internet Drug Company

LAFAYETTE, La. – Paul Williams, Jr., 56, of Grand Coteau, La., was sentenced by United States District Judge Rebecca F. Doherty to 15 months for filling fraudulent prescriptions for an illegal internet drug company, United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced today. William also was ordered to serve 3 years of supervised release at the conclusion of his prison sentence. In addition, a preliminary order of forfeiture was signed by the Judge ordering that the Grand Coteau Prescription Shoppe and Grocery be forfeited to the United States.

According to court documents, Williams was the owner and pharmacist at the Grand Coteau Prescription Shoppe (GCPS) in Grand Coteau, Louisiana. In September 2006, GCPS entered into a contract with Ardopole International Inc., a Panamanian Company, which paid GCPS \$8 per prescription ordered by the company. GCPS had no costs associated with filling the prescriptions because the Panamanian company also paid for all the drugs that were being filled. They had no financial dealing with the customers. The customers dealt with the Panamanian Company and the company then e-mailed the prescriptions to the Pharmacy.

GCPS would not receive an original signed prescription from Ardopole International, but would receive a scanned document over the internet. The document had a signature on it claiming to be a doctor's signature, but in fact was false. Sometimes the signature appeared to be written by a child. Other times there was simply an X in the place of the signature. Between 2006 and 2007 Williams filled fraudulent prescriptions and profited \$881,970. The prescriptions were primarily for narcotic medications, including Lorazepan, Didrex and Ambien.

The case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, New Orleans, Division and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney J. Luke Walker.

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