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MIDDLE DISTRICT *of* FLORIDA

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, March 23, 2015

Federal Jury Convicts Scientists Of Wire Fraud, Identity Theft, And Obstruction

Tampa, Florida – United States Attorney A. Lee Bentley, III announces that a federal jury has found Mahmoud Aldissi (a/k/a, Matt) and Anastassia Bogomolova (a/k/a, Anastasia) guilty of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud (7 counts), aggravated identity theft (5 counts), and falsification of records involving a federal investigation (2 counts). Aldissi and Bogomolova each face a maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison. The sentencing hearing has been set for May 28, 2015.

According to testimony and evidence presented during the month-long trial, through their two companies, Fractal Systems, Inc., and Smart Polymers Research Corp., Aldissi and Bogomolova fraudulently obtained approximately \$10.5 million worth of small business research awards from the federal government. In order to be awarded contracts, they submitted proposals using the stolen identities of real people in order to create false endorsements of and for their proposed contracts. In the proposals, they also lied about their facilities, costs, the principal investigator on some of the contracts, and certifications in the proposals.

"The Small Business Innovation Research program is a vital link in stimulating innovative technologies. The conviction of these individuals on all charges including identify theft and falsification of records sends a clear message that fraud in this program will not be tolerated," said Allison C. Lerner, Inspector General at the National Science Foundation. "I commend the U.S. Attorney's Office and our investigative partners for their work on this case."

"This conviction demonstrates the commitment of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service and its law enforcement partners to protect the integrity of all Department of Defense programs," said Special Agent in Charge John F. Khin, Southeast Field Office. "DCIS aggressively investigates violators who defraud the DoD procurement process, to preserve precious American taxpayer dollars intended to support our Warfighters."

"These guilty verdicts are another win for our organization," said Frank Robey, the director of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command's Major Procurement Fraud Unit. "Although these two defendants tried to cover their tracks with layers of deceptive paperwork, our special agents, in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies, were able to peel back the layers and uncover their scheme to defraud multiple government agencies."

"These defendants stole millions of dollars from the American taxpayer by systematically scheming to take contracting opportunities from legitimate business owners. This audacious scheme included several contracts awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA's Office of Inspector General (OIG) will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to aggressively investigate and expose these types of crimes," said Jerry Polk, Acting Special Agent in Charge, EPA OIG Atlanta Field Office.

Paul Martin, NASA Inspector General, congratulated the prosecution team and noted that, "The NASA Office of Inspector General is committed to ensuring aggressive oversight of taxpayer funds used for scientific research by NASA contractors and grantees."

This case was investigated by Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Office of the Inspector General (NASA-OIG), the Major Procurement Fraud Unit (MPFU) of the United States Army Criminal Investigation Division (Army CID), National Science Foundation's Office of the Inspector General (NSF-OIG), the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of the Inspector General (EPA-OIG), the Department of Energy's Office of the Inspector General (DOE-OIG), and the Department of Homeland Security's Office of the Inspector General (DHS-OIG). It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas N. Palermo.

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