



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
Eastern District of Virginia

U.S. ATTORNEY DANA J. BOENTE

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Peter Carr
Public Information Officer
Phone (703) 842-4050 Fax: (703) 299-2584
Email: usavae.press@usdoj.gov
Web Address: www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae

Miami Man Sentenced to 88 Months in \$11 Million Bank-Fraud Conspiracy

(**Alexandria, Va**) - Henry "Uche" Obilo, age 30, of Miami, Fl., was sentenced to 88 months in prison, followed by three years of supervised release, for his role as a leader in a home equity line of credit fraud scheme that has been linked to more than \$36 million in attempted fraud and almost \$11 million in actual losses. To date, investigators have identified more than 180 victims. Obilo was ordered to pay restitution of \$577,149.33.

Dana J. Boente, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Earl L. Cook, Chief of Police, Alexandria Police Department, Joseph Persichini, Jr., Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI Washington Field Office; and Jeffrey Irvine, Special Agent-in-Charge of the United States Secret Service's Washington Field Office, made the announcement after Obilo was sentenced by United States District Judge T.S. Ellis, III.

According to court records, Obilo and other co-conspirators used fee-based web databases to search for potential victim account holders with large balances in home equity line of credit (HELOC) accounts. This information included name, address, date of birth, and social security number. Once the conspirators identified a victim, they used other online databases to obtain information commonly used in security questions, such as the victim's mother's maiden name. The conspirators then obtained credit reports on the victims in order to verify personal information and account balances.

Armed with a victim's personal information, the conspirators, including Obilo and Gipson, called the victim's financial institution, impersonated the victim, and transferred the majority of the available money from the HELOC account into an account from which a wire transfer could be sent. The conspirators would then wire transfer hundreds of thousands of dollars to domestic or overseas accounts controlled by members of the conspiracy. The conspirators used caller-ID spoofing services, prepaid cell phones and PC wireless Internet access cards, and transferred victims' home telephone numbers in order to impersonate the victim and avoid identifying themselves.

Once the fraudulently-transferred funds arrived in the destination bank, a conspirator with access to the account would withdraw funds and transfer them to other members of the conspiracy after taking a portion of the proceeds for himself.

The following seven conspirators have also been sentenced in this case:

- Abel Nnabue, age 34, of Dallas, who was sentenced to 54 months on Jan. 30, 2009.
- Precious Matthews, age 27, of Miami, who was sentenced 51 months on Feb. 13, 2009.

- Brandy Anderson, age 31, of Dallas, who was sentenced to 2 years of supervised probation and 40 days of community confinement on Feb. 20, 2009.
- Ezenwa Onyedebelu, age 21, of Dallas, who was sentenced to 37 months on Feb. 27, 2009.
- Daniel Orjinta, age 43, of Nigeria, who was sentenced to 42 months on March 6, 2009.
- Paula Gipson, age 34, of Dallas, Texas, who was sentenced to 15 months on Sept. 4, 2009.

The conspiracy's ringleader, Tobechi Onwuhara, age 30, of Dallas, has an outstanding warrant for his arrest and remains a fugitive. Information about Onwuhara is available on the America's Most Wanted website: <http://www.amw.com/fugitives/brief.cfm?id=59947> This case was investigated by the Alexandria Police Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and United States Secret Service. Assistant United States Attorney John Eisinger and Trial Attorney Tyler Newby of the Department of Justice's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section are prosecuting the case on behalf of the United States.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae>. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov> or on <http://pacer.uspci.uscourts.gov>.

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