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HOUSTON COMPUTER ADMINISTRATOR SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS IN PRISON FOR HACKING FORMER EMPLOYER'S COMPUTER NETWORK

WASHINGTON – The former director of information technology for a non-profit organ and tissue donation center was sentenced today to two years in prison for hacking into her former employer's computer network, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Texas Tim Johnson.

Danielle Duann, 51, of Houston, pleaded guilty on April 30, 2009, to a one-count criminal indictment charging her with unauthorized computer access. Duann was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge David Hittner in the Southern District of Texas. In addition to the two-year prison term, Judge Hittner sentenced Duann to a three-year period of supervised release following completion of her prison sentence, and ordered her to pay $94,222 in restitution to compensate her former employer for the damage that resulted from her actions.

In pleading guilty, Duann admitted to illegally accessing the computer network of LifeGift Organ Donation Center and then intentionally deleting organ donation database records, accounting invoice files, database and accounting software applications and various backup files, without authorization. LifeGift is the sole provider of organ procurement services for more than 200 hospitals throughout 109 counties in North, Southeast and West Texas.

According to court documents, LifeGift terminated Duann from her position as their director of information technology on Nov. 7, 2005, and revoked all of her previous administrative rights and access to the LifeGift computer network. In pleading guilty, Duann admitted that beginning on the evening of Nov. 7, 2005, and continuing until Nov. 8, 2005, she repeatedly gained unauthorized access to the LifeGift computer network via a remote connection from her home and intentionally caused damage by deleting numerous database files and software applications, as well as their backups, related to LifeGift's organ and tissue recovery operations.

Duann further admitted that in an attempt to conceal her activities, she disabled the computer logging functions on several LifeGift computer servers and erased the computer logs that recorded her remote access to the LifeGift network

This case was investigated by the FBI and is being jointly prosecuted by Trial Attorney Thomas Dukes of the Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section and

Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Bret W. Davis of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas.

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