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Iowa City Woman Convicted of Accessing President's Student Loan Records

Davenport, IA - On August 25, 2010, a federal jury found Sandra Teague, a.k.a., Sandra Teague-Garvis, 54, of Iowa City, IA, guilty of exceeding authorized computer access, announced United States Attorney Nicholas A. Klinefeldt. Teague, a former Department of Education (DOE) contract employee, had been charged with accessing without authorization the student loan records of President Barack Obama in 2008 when he was a candidate for the presidency.

Teague's activities came to light when the United States Department of Education, Office of Inspector General (DOE-OIG) began an investigation to determine if its employees, or those of its contractors, had inappropriately accessed the student loan information of certain celebrities or well-known political and sports figures. A number of leads came back to Vangent Corporation in Coralville, Iowa. Vangent, a DOE contractor, assists with student loan inquiries via their call center and engages in debt collection. Vangent employees utilize the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) database, which is maintained by DOE pursuant to the 1992 Higher Education Act, in the performance of their duties. This database contains the private information of borrowers, including that of President Barack Obama.

As a result of the investigation, nine former employees of Vangent were charged with exceeding authorized computer access. All nine are alledged to have accessed President Obama's student loan information either while he was a candidate for the presidency, President-Elect or President of the United States. To date, Teague is the only one of the nine who has chosen to go to trial. Seven of the nine have pleaded guilty or are scheduled to do so, while one other case remains set for trial.

Teague testified at trial, claiming that someone stole her unique NSLDS identifier and password to access President Obama's information. The jury deliberated for just over an hour before finding her guilty.

This investigation was conducted by the United States Department of Education, Office of Inspector General, and prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Iowa.

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