Former AmeriCorps Member Sentenced for Education Award Fraud

Following a guilty plea in U.S. District Court, Southern District Court, New York, New York, Mr. Otha Caldwell, a former AmeriCorps member in New York City, was sentenced on October 29, 2002, to serve two years of supervised probation, to pay a $100 court fee, and make restitution of $2,363.50 to the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation).

Following an investigation by the Corporation's Office of Inspector General, Mr. Caldwell admitted to defrauding the Corporation by falsifying two AmeriCorps Voucher and Payment Request forms to directly obtain an Education Award in the amount of $2,362.50 rather than having the payment sent to an educational or lending institution.

Mr. Caldwell used the address of a relative as the mailing address for City College of New York. When the check arrived at this misrepresented address, Mr. Caldwell intercepted, endorsed, and cashed the $2,362.50 check.

Under Corporation rules, Education Awards cannot be paid directly to qualifying AmeriCorps members. Awards are paid directly to qualified schools or to lending institutions to help members pay off their student loans.