

PRESS RELEASE

Two Detroiters Charged with Stealing Over \$12 Million in Separate Federal Student Aid Fraud Schemes

Wednesday, September 24, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Michigan

DETROIT - Two defendants have been charged via criminal complaints for their roles in separate frauds related to Federal Student Aid, announced United States Attorney Jerome Gorgon.

Gorgon was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge John Woolley, U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General (DOE-OIG), and Special Agent in Charge Megan Howell, Great Lakes Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General (DOL-OIG).

The first complaint charges Brandon Robinson, 41, of Detroit with wire fraud related to false Federal Student Aid (FSA) claims submitted in the names of other individuals. Robinson was arrested earlier today and appeared in federal court this afternoon on the charges.

According to the complaint, Robinson is responsible for leading a years-long scheme to obtain fraudulent Federal Student Aid benefits involving so-called "straw students" who were enrolled for the primary purpose of receiving FSA. Specifically, the complaint alleges that between January 2015 and February 2024, Robinson submitted fraudulent FSA claims for more than 1200 individuals, involving over 100 schools in 24 states. As a result of the scheme, it is alleged that Robinson fraudulently caused more than \$16M in FSA benefits to be awarded, with more than \$10M disbursed. Additionally, the complaint alleges that Robinson also filed over 100 fraudulent unemployment insurance claims between April 2020 and March 2023, causing the disbursement of over \$1M in UI benefits.

The second complaint charges Michelle Hill, 48, of Detroit with wire fraud, in connection with a separate FSA scheme. Hill was arrested yesterday morning and made an initial appearance in federal court yesterday afternoon.

According to the complaint, between July 2015 and July 2025, Hill devised and executed a scheme to obtain fraudulent FSA benefits involving more than 80 individuals, predominantly enrolled at Wayne County Community College. The complaint alleges that many of these individuals were enrolled in the same or similar degree programs and were taking the same or similar online courses. It is also alleged that Hill herself often completed the coursework on the students' behalf, to make it appear that the students were progressing toward degrees and prolonging their eligibility for FSA benefits. As a result of the scheme, it is alleged that Hill fraudulently caused more than \$3M in FSA benefits to be awarded, with more than \$2.5M disbursed.

A complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. Trial cannot be held on felony charges in a complaint. When the investigations are completed, determinations will be made whether to seek felony indictments.

The cases are being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys John K. Neal and Ryan A. Particka. The Robinson investigation is being conducted jointly by agents from the Department of Education Office of the Inspector General and the Department of Labor Office of the Inspector General, with assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Hill investigation is being conducted by agents from Department of Education Office of the Inspector General.

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