

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Northern District of Georgia

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Former political candidate sentenced to prison for stealing federal funds

ATLANTA – Kevin Edwards, a former political candidate and nightclub owner, has been sentenced to two years, three months in federal prison for stealing federal funds administered by the Atlanta Workforce Development Agency (AWDA).

“Edwards stole over \$600,000 in grant funds intended to train unemployed Atlanta citizens,” said U.S. Attorney John Horn. “He chose to steal money rather than training employees for long term employment. The federal government lost valuable grant funds, and those seeking job training were cheated out of an opportunity to obtain job skills.”

“The U.S. Department of Labor entrusted Edwards to provide training services to those in Atlanta affected by unemployment. Rather than provide valuable on-the-job training, Edwards victimized workers by assigning them odd jobs such as cleaning, and paid them far less than he reported. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to investigate those who steal training grant money from Department of Labor programs,” said Rafiq Ahmad, Special Agent in Charge, Atlanta Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

According to U.S. Attorney Horn, the indictment, and other information presented in court: AWDA's On-the-Job Training Program was funded with grants from the U.S. Department of Labor. The purpose of the OJT program is to increase employment by encouraging companies to hire employees that need additional job skills that the employer is willing to provide in exchange for wage reimbursement. The ultimate goal of the OJT program is for the employer to hire the participant at the end of the OJT contract period.

Edwards, a former budget analyst with the City of Atlanta, political candidate and nightclub owner, owned or controlled three companies in Atlanta between 2010 and 2012. During this three-year period, the three companies owned or controlled by Edwards received approximately \$649,000 in OJT funds from the AWDA.

He also falsely represented to AWDA that his companies, Cronus Development, LLC (Cronus), CGE Construction and Consulting, Inc. (CGE), and The Elite Academy and Learning Center (Elite), would hire and train employees with the goal of full-time employment. Instead, Edwards failed to provide training programs, submitted forged and fraudulent wage reimbursement requests for employees that never worked for his companies, and paid workers only a fraction of the salary reported to AWDA. More specifically, instead of receiving training, OJT employees for CGE and Cronus reported that they did odd jobs, including cleaning up properties, yard work and working at one of Edwards' nightclubs. Despite these shortcomings, Edwards received full payments from AWDA through the OJT program.

Kevin Edwards, 46, of Atlanta, Georgia was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Steven C. Jones to two years, three months in federal prison and three years of supervised release and ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$489,710.43. On December 13, 2016, Edwards pleaded guilty to one count of theft of government funds.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Brown prosecuted the criminal case.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney's Public Affairs Office at USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov (link sends e-mail) or (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga>.