



Office of Inspector General

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PRESS RELEASE

August 31, 2018
Press Office: 202-712-1150
<http://oig.usaid.gov/>

Former Financial Manager for USAID Subgrantee Sentenced for Embezzling Global Health Funds

Los Angeles, Calif.—Last week, Zachary Alexander Paul, a former finance manager for United Cerebral Palsy Wheels for Humanity, or UCP, was sentenced in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California to six months in prison for embezzling over \$140,000 in funds from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Paul, a resident of Northridge, California, admitted to stealing the funds in a plea earlier this year and also received six months of home detention and was ordered to pay approximately \$140,328.76 in restitution as part of his sentence. Paul's plea and sentencing are the results of a joint investigation by the USAID Office of Inspector General, or OIG; the Los Angeles Police Department; and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California.

As a subgrantee under USAID's Advancing Partners and Communities program, UCP had received funding to provide wheelchairs and physical therapy to individuals with disabilities in Latin America. Paul, as UCP's financial manager, was responsible for administering federal grant funding and for overseeing accounting operations to ensure accurate recordkeeping and compliance with all grant, state, and federal regulations. Based on the investigation, authorities found that, from November 2013 to August 2016, Paul forged UCP checks in his own name, drawing from USAID-provided funds, and cashed those checks for personal use. Over this time, Paul stole approximately \$140,328.76 of funds entrusted to UCP by USAID.

"Regrettably, fraud like this does occur," said Jonathan Schofield, a Special Agent-in-Charge at USAID's Office of Inspector General. "But, American taxpayers trust that foreign assistance funds will be used for their intended purpose. Mr. Paul abused that trust and we thank the Los Angeles Police Department and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California for their excellent work and partnership in holding him accountable for his actions."

USAID OIG's mission is to safeguard and strengthen U.S. foreign assistance through timely, relevant, and impactful oversight, including investigations and audits. OIG promotes the integrity and accountability of organizations receiving USAID funds by pursuing allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse, and by educating agency and

implementer staff on fraud schemes and how to prevent and respond to them.

USAID employees, contractors, grantees, and beneficiaries may report suspected cases of fraud, waste, or abuse to the OIG through its public website, <https://oig.usaid.gov/>, or by using the information below:

Telephone	Mail	Email
1 (800) 230-6539 or (202) 712-1023	U.S. Agency for International Development Office of Inspector General P.O. Box 657 Washington, D.C., 20044-0657 USA	ig.hotline@usaid.gov

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