



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

TODD P. GRAVES

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow

OCTOBER 14, 2003
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOURTH CO-CONSPIRATOR PLEADS GUILTY, ADMITS GROUP CASHED 122 COUNTERFEIT AT&T PAYROLL CHECKS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a fourth co-conspirator pleaded guilty in federal court today to his role in a conspiracy to cash \$92,614.77 in counterfeit AT&T payroll checks.

Lance E. Melson, 27, of Kansas City, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner this afternoon to his role in a conspiracy to cash a total of 122 counterfeit AT&T payroll checks.

By pleading guilty, **Melson** admitted that he possessed three false checks drawn on the account of AT&T on Nov. 11, 1998, and Nov. 13, 1998. He also admitted that he cashed 10 counterfeit AT&T payroll checks between October and November 1998.

As a result of pleading guilty, **Melson** may be subject to a sentence of up to 10 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine of up to \$250,000. His sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

Melson is the fourth co-conspirator to be convicted in this counterfeit check-cashing scheme. All four defendants were employees of Premier Janitorial Service, which had a contract to clean office space at the AT&T offices in Lee's Summit, Mo., when they conspired to cash counterfeit checks against the company.

On July 22, 2003, **Derick D. Roath**, 28, of Kansas City, was sentenced to two months in federal prison without parole and ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$7,748.92 for his role in the conspiracy. On Jan. 28, 2003, **Roath** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to utter forged securities, three counts of uttering falsely made checks and bank fraud. In total, he also admitted

that he cashed 10 counterfeit AT&T payroll checks.

On June 27, 2003, **Larnell B. Roath**, 29, of Kansas City, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to utter forged securities, three counts of uttering falsely made checks and bank fraud.

The three co-defendants' supervisor at Premier Janitorial Service also has pleaded guilty to her role in the conspiracy.

On July 12, 2002, **Latresa Rushing**, 31, of Kansas City, a supervisor at the janitorial service, pleaded guilty to using a computer to produce the counterfeit checks. **Rushing** admitted that she gave most of the 122 counterfeit checks to certain employees at Premier and other persons with the understanding that if the checks were cashed, she would receive a portion of the proceeds.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sheryle L. Jeans. It was investigated by the United States Secret Service with assistance from the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow