**Department of Justice**

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**Boca Raton Man Convicted of Securities Fraud, Tax Fraud**

WASHINGTON - Donald Platten of Boca Raton, Fla., was convicted today of conspiracy, securities fraud and tax charges following a jury trial before Judge Donald Middlebrooks in West Palm Beach, Fla., the Justice Department and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announced.

In December 2008, Platten [was indicted](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/fls/PressReleases/081215-02.html) on 17 charges, including conspiracy to commit securities fraud, securities fraud, conspiracy to commit wire fraud and impeding the internal revenue laws. He was convicted on the conspiracy to commit securities fraud count, 6 of the 14 securities fraud counts, conspiracy to commit wire fraud and impeding the internal revenue laws.

According to the indictment and evidence introduced at trial, Platten was the president of Harvard Learning Centers Inc., a Florida corporation also located in Boca Raton. Harvard Learning changed its name several times and claimed to be involved in several different business ventures. From 2004 to 2007, Platten caused Harvard Learning to issue stock to his wife, his sister, his ex-sister-in-law and his limousine driver, supposedly as repayment of promissory notes, even though Platten knew that the promissory notes were fraudulent and the company did not owe these individuals the money reflected on the promissory notes. In this manner, Platten caused Harvard Learning to issue stock to repay his own obligations and to enrich himself, his relatives and others. Platten also caused a subsidiary of Harvard Learning to pay the personal expenses of himself, his wife, his mother, his sister and his teenage son.

According to the indictment and evidence introduced at trial, Platten failed to file corporate federal tax returns for Harvard Learning for the years 2004 through 2007 and failed to file his personal federal tax returns for the years 2004 and 2005. For the year 2006, Platten failed to report on his personal tax return the income that he received as a result of Harvard Learning’s stock issuances and payment of his personal expenses.

According to the indictment and evidence introduced at trial, Platten caused his limousine driver to purchase the house and obtain a mortgage by providing false information about his income and assets in order to conceal Platten’s ownership of a house in Boca Raton. The day after he purchased the house, Platten caused his limousine driver to execute a quit claim deed transferring his interest in the property to Platten's wife.

Judge Middlebrooks scheduled sentencing for Oct. 30, 2009, at 10:30 a.m. Platten faces a maximum sentence of 133 years in prison and a maximum fine of $30.75 million.

John A. DiCicco, Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Justice Department’s Tax Division, commended the IRS Criminal Investigation and the Food and Drug Administration Office of Criminal Investigations agents who investigated the case as well, Tax Division Trial Attorneys Steven D. Grimberg, Gregory R. Bockin and Kenneth C. Vert, who prosecuted the case. Acting Assistant Attorney General DiCicco also thanked the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Florida for their assistance in successfully prosecuting this matter.