

2 0 1 5
a Banner Year
in Illinois Corruption

Anti-Corruption Report Number 9
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The year 2015 was a banner year for corruption in the State of Illinois, the third most corrupt state in the nation. Based on the evidence in this report, it appears that our elected officials, our state and local governments, and society as a whole, are losing the battle against corruption.

The most salacious corruption case of the past year is rooted in Downstate Illinois. Dennis Hastert, former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and former Congressman from the town of Plano, some 50 miles west of Chicago. Hastert was indicted by federal prosecutors in May for structuring the withdrawal of \$1.7 million dollars in violation of bank laws and for lying to the FBI. According to news reports, Hastert gave the money to a former student of Yorkville High School to compensate him for concealing Hastert's alleged misconduct decades ago when Hastert was a teacher and coach at the school. Hastert was convicted in October when he pleaded guilty to a felony count of evading bank reporting laws in a hush-money scheme. He is now awaiting sentencing.

While the Hastert indictment and conviction garnered national news headlines and was the most significant corruption story of the year, Illinois experienced many additional corruption events in 2015. In this report, we document 27 convictions, 28 indictments, and the launching of 11 corruption investigation. In addition we cover the sentencing of 30 public corruption convicts last year, most of whom were convicted in a year or two before 2015.

Almost all of the corruption cases were the work of U.S. Attorneys in Illinois' three federal judicial districts: the Northern District, which is based in Chicago and handled a large majority of the total, and the Central and Southern Districts. We include six public corruption cases reported by the Cook County State's Attorney in 2015 but did not have the resources to survey the other 101 county state's attorneys in Illinois.

In the following pages, we discuss a few corruption highlights of the past year and then summarize the corruption cases under these headings: Illinois Congressmen; Chicago; Police Corruption and Abuse; Cook County; the Suburbs and Collar Counties; the State Capitol; and Medicare and Medicaid fraud.

This report covers corruption convictions and other legal actions in 2015. It is a follow-up to *Corrupt Illinois* by Thomas J. Gradel and Dick Simpson, published in February 2015, by the University of Illinois Press. (See: www.press.uillinois.edu/books/catalog/78ndq5ty9780252078552.html)

Corruption Highlights, 2015

In April, just days after Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel was elected to a second term, two mega scandals burst into the public's consciousness followed by state and federal investigations, legal settlements, indictments, at least one convictions, and months of news headlines.

The first of these, the fatal shooting by a police officer of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald, was seen as so horrific and likely unjustified that on April 11th, Chicago's top lawyer asked the Finance Committee and then the full City Council to approve a \$5 million payment to the teenager's family. The State's Attorney and the U.S. Attorney then announced that they were conducting investigations into the shooting death.

Throughout the summer and fall, the City, with the Mayor's approval, fought the release of videos showing that Officer Jason Van Dyke, who is white, shot Laquan McDonald, an African-American, as he walked away from the officer who continued to fire more than a dozen shots into the youth's body as he lay on the ground. Despite numerous protests and requests from the community, aldermen and the news media, the city would not release the video recordings and neither the State's Attorney nor the federal prosecutors filed any charges in the case.

Finally on the day before Thanksgiving, following a judge's order, the City released video recordings from police dashboard cameras and State's Attorney Anita Alvarez announced that she charged Officer Van Dyke with first-degree murder. Protestors jammed traffic in the downtown business district and on Michigan Avenue asserting that the Mayor covered up the shooting until after his reelection and the State's Attorney helped by refusing or delaying prosecution. A week later as protests continued, Mayor Rahm Emanuel fired Police Superintendent Gary McCarthy. Then the U.S. Justice Department announced that it was launching a wide-ranging civil rights investigation into the Chicago Police Department.

On December 16, a Cook County Grand Jury indicted Officer Van Dyke on six murder charges and one count of official misconduct. At the end of the month, Van Dyke pled not-guilty and was released after posting the required 10 percent of a \$1.5 million bail.

While Officer Van Dyke has not yet been tried, several other police officers have been fired, resigned or pushed into retirement and several investigations are ongoing. This case and investigations into the cover-up will continue to play out for a few years. However, its impact on Chicago's reputation for corruption and police abuse of African-Americans will continue for long afterwards.

On the same day City Council approved the \$5 million payment in the Laquan McDonald's shooting, another mega scandal grabbed the headlines. Although a good bit of this

scandal was reported nearly two years earlier in October, 2013 by *Catalyst* magazine, it received little attention until after the Mayor's re-election on April 7th.

Then on April 15th, *Catalyst* and the *Chicago Sun-Times* reported that the FBI was investigating Chicago Public Schools' award of a more than \$20 million no-bid contract to SUPES Academy that formerly employed CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett.

Like the shooting of Laquan McDonald, this scandal continued to fester for months. After a quiet investigation by the CPS Inspector General in 2013, a federal investigation was launched. In May 2015, Barbara Byrd-Bennett resigned and in October, she was indicted by the U.S. Attorney. He charged her with steering \$23 million worth of contracts to her former employer, SUPES Academy. Two executives who owned SUPES, the company itself, and another company they owned were also charged. On October 12, Barbara Byrd-Bennett pleaded guilty and is awaiting sentencing.

Illinois' Errant Congressmen

Three Congressmen, in addition to Dennis Hastert, who served Illinois in the U.S. House of Representatives, drew unwanted attention in 2015 to their illegal or unethical behavior.

Former Congressman Mel Reynolds, a Chicago Democrat, was indicted by federal prosecutors for failing to file income tax returns for four years. He has been in trouble before. In 1995, he was convicted for having sex with an underage campaign worker. Three years later after resigning and going to prison, he was convicted for bank fraud, misusing campaign funds, and lying to the Federal Election Commission. In 2001 President Clinton commuted his seven-year sentence to allow Reynolds to spend his last two years in a half-way house. In 2014, Reynolds was deported from Zimbabwe after he pleaded guilty to staying longer than his visa permitted. Charges that he had pornographic images on his phone were dropped.

Congressman Aaron Schock, a Republican from Peoria, resigned his House seat in March after news stories about his misuse of campaign funds and his spending nearly \$40,000 of taxpayers' money to remodel his office like a "Downton Abbey" set. He is the target of an ongoing federal grand jury investigation, but to date, he has not been indicted.

Jesse Jackson, Jr., who had been in federal prison for 18 months was released to a half-way house and then to his home in Washington, D. C. The Chicago Democrat was convicted in 2013 for conspiring with his wife, Chicago Alderman Sandi Jackson for stealing \$750,000 in campaign funds and spending it on vacations, clothing and luxury items.

Chicago, a Corruption Leader

Chicago residents experienced a very active corruption scene in 2015. In addition to the conviction of Chicago Public Schools CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett and the indictment of Police Officer Jason Van Dyke for the murder of Laquan McDonald, corruption raised its larcenous head in the city's aldermanic offices, in public schools, among those charged with letting contracts, and in several city departments.

Sandi Jackson, who had resigned as 7th Ward Alderman in January 2013, entered a federal prison camp last October after her husband, Jesse Jackson, Jr., returned from prison. (See above.) In February 2013, she was convicted of conspiring to commit wire fraud, mail fraud and making false statements.

Curtis Thompson, Chief of Staff for Alderman Howard Brookins, Jr., (21st Ward) was sentenced in May to 15 months in prison after pleading guilty to receiving a \$7,500 bribe from an undercover federal informant who wanted Brookins to support a liquor license for a convenience store in the 21st Ward. Brookins was investigated but has not been indicted or charged.

Former Alderman, Edward Vrdolyak was named as a witness in an \$800,000 federal income tax case. Attorney Daniel Soso was indicted for failing to pay taxes on income he received in connection with Illinois' lawsuit against tobacco companies. According to the indictment, Soso received some of the income from a hidden arrangement with an individual said to be Vrdolyak, but he was not charged in this case. Vrdolyak was 10th Ward Alderman from 1971 to 1987. He was convicted in 2007 of conspiracy in a real estate kickback scheme.

In August, Karen Finley, CEO of Redflex Traffic Systems Inc., pleaded guilty to funneling cash and other personal financial benefits to a Chicago official and his friend, knowing that the payments would help persuade the city to award red-light camera contracts to Redflex. Earlier she pleaded guilty to a similar scheme in Ohio. The city official, John Bills, was found guilty in January, 2016. Last September, the City of Chicago sued Redflex in an attempt to recover \$300 million from the firm.

There were three additional note-worthy convictions last year in Chicago:

- A tax and license compliance supervisor in the city's Business and Consumer Affairs Department pleaded guilty to official misconduct and for the theft of more than \$2,000 worth of unstamped cartons of cigarettes confiscated by inspectors.

- A clerk, working for the Chicago Department of Transportation and the Office of Emergency Management and Communication, pleaded guilty to stealing \$741,299 worth of checks for city permits.

- A federal prison chaplain, who ministered to convicted Family Secrets killer, Frank Calabrese, Sr., pleaded guilty to passing messages from Calabrese who was trying to hide a valuable Stradivarius violin from government seizure. In the U.S. District Court in Chicago, Catholic Priest Eugene Klein pleaded guilty to conspiracy to defraud the United States.

These are some additional indictments handed down and investigations launched in 2015:

- In June, FBI agents obtained warrants to search two email accounts tied to an executive of LAZ Parking who allegedly received \$90,000 in bribe payments to steer a \$22 million contract for (Chicago) parking meters to a favored company. The Chicago Sun-Times reported that the executive was Felipe Oropesa, of Marietta, Ga., and that he was expected to plead guilty in federal court in Atlanta. Two days later, the paper reported that federal prosecutors alleged that George Levey, of Cale Parking Systems USA Inc., admitted that he paid \$90,000 to Oropesa, who helped him craft a bid for the Chicago contract.

- Two co-owners of 350Green LLC of Los Angeles were indicted for scheming to defraud Chicago and other governments of grants intended to establish charging stations for electric vehicles. The indictment alleges that the company obtained \$2.9 million in grants after falsely claiming that it purchased and paid subcontractors and vendors for battery chargers. The indictment seeks forfeiture of \$1.9 million.

- Staffers at two public schools were the targets of arrests warrants in an investigation of the theft of more than \$876,000 from Gage Park and Michele Clark high schools. The investigation was a joint effort by CPS' Inspector General and the Cook County State's Attorney.

In addition to those mentioned above, three individuals were sentenced last year:

- A Chicago revenue inspector was sentenced to 12 months probation for extortion for accepting a \$500 bribe to alert a store owner about upcoming inspections.

- A prison guard was sent to prison for three years for stealing identities of inmates for the purpose of filing illegal tax returns.

- A former Chicago resident, who previously pleaded guilty to accepting cash payments to help 80 people file false bankruptcy petitions as a way of avoiding City of Chicago impound fees, was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison.

Crime and Abuse by Chicago Police

The alleged unjustified shooting of Laquan McDonald by Chicago Police Officer Jason Van Dyke and the alleged cover-up of the killing, if proven, will rank as the most horrendous single example of police abuse and corruption in Chicago in decades. But additional cases last year attracted a great deal of public attention.

In November, shortly before Thanksgiving, then CPD Superintendent Gary McCarthy moved to fire Police Officer Dante Servin, who is white, for shooting an African-American woman in 2012. Last April, Servin became the first police officer since 1997 to go on trial for a fatal shooting. Servin had been charged with involuntary manslaughter for shooting over his shoulder from his car at several individuals and killing Rekia Boyd. In the middle of the trial the judge threw out the case because Servin had been charged incorrectly. The judge ruled that he should have been charged with murder. After waiting six months, McCarthy said he would ask the Police Board to approve the firing of Servin. He was still on the Police Department payroll when this report was published. In early December, McCarthy was fired by Mayor Emanuel.

In another police misconduct case, Commander Glenn Evans was acquitted on charges that he had shoved his gun down a suspect Rickey Williams' throat, despite the fact that Williams' DNA was found on Evans's gun. On December 14, a Cook County judge ruled that there were inconsistencies in the Williams' testimony and that there were other ways to explain how the DNA got on Evans' gun.

On the same day, a federal judge ruled in a civil lawsuit that a Chicago police civilian employee used unnecessary "brute force when he dragged a handcuffed suspect out of his cell and down the hallway. While still in his cell, the suspect was shocked three times with a Taser. The judge also said a police officer supervisor failed to stop the abuse. Later, the suspect died at a hospital reportedly from a fatal reaction from a drug that was administered.

In January last year, five officers were charged in a fight with two men outside a Golden Nugget restaurant. Three of the officers were charged with battery and two were charged with failing to de-escalate an unprovoked attack on the two men.

In other cases, a Chicago Police Sergeant pleaded guilty to passing information to a store clerk for cash payments; another police officer was sentenced to a year in prison for his part in a scheme to extort tow truck drivers in return for steering business their way, and a female civilian CPD employee was sentenced to two years in prison for stealing money and personal property from the police evidence section.

Cook County, A.K.A. Crook County

For Cook County Circuit Court Clerk, Dorothy Brown, the year 2015 was, to quote Queen Elizabeth II, "an annus horribilis." Clerk Brown and her husband, Benton Cook III, have been investigated by the federal government in probes that began as far back as May 2014. That's when the *Chicago Sun-Times* reported that Brown's husband was subpoenaed to appear before a federal grand jury investigating Cook's role in receiving grants from the state's anti-violence program.

In August 2015, Brown was slated for re-election by the Cook County Democratic Party despite rumors that not only her husband but that she too was the target of a federal investigation, which she denied.

Then in October, the *Chicago Sun-Times* reported that the FBI was investigating whether Brown accepted loans from employees in exchange for jobs or promotions. The *Chicago Tribune* also reported that the FBI seized Clerk Brown's cell phone and was investigating a land deal with a campaign contributor that benefitted Brown and her husband.

To make matters worse for the embattled Brown, the Cook County Democratic Party withdrew its endorsement and instead, by an unanimous vote of the county's 80 Democratic committeemen, threw its support behind Ald. Michelle Harris (8th Ward) for the Clerk's seat.

Before the horrible year came to an end, a former employee in Clerk Brown's office was indicted by the U.S. Attorney for lying to a grand jury about his hiring after allegedly making a \$15,000 loan to a company controlled by Brown's husband. To date neither Dorothy Brown nor Benton Cook have been indicted or charged with any crime.

Three Cook County employees were convicted last year of corruption related crimes:

- An official in the county's Forest Preserve District pleaded guilty to bribery for accepting a \$10,000 kickback to steer contracts to a west suburban construction company owner who was working undercover for the FBI. He was sentenced to a year in prison.
- A sheriff's police officer pleaded guilty to interference with commerce with threats of violence. He also admitted that he and two other officers carried out at least eight robberies of drug dealers yielding \$300,000 in profits.
- A corrections officer pleaded guilty to smuggling marijuana and alcohol into Cook County jail.

Included among those indicted last year were a supervisor for the Cook County Health and Hospital System who was charged with stealing money paid for patient's medications and a clerk in the Recorder of Deeds office charged with accepting a bribe.

Corruption in the Suburbs and Collar Counties

Many of the corruption schemes in the suburbs display similar characteristics to the more notorious corruption cases in Chicago. Suburban cities, towns and villages also have kickback schemes, falsified documents, fraudulent contracts, and larcenous public officials using public funds for personal expenses. Additionally, many of these schemes have been underway for a long time, causing substantial financial losses, drawing negative attention, and staining the reputation of the affected municipalities.

The following examples aroused taxpayers' concern in 2015:

A former North Chicago School Board Member was sentenced to 30 months in federal prison for receiving at least \$566,000 in kickbacks in a bus contract fraud scheme. For almost a decade between 2001 and 2010 several transportation companies received nearly \$21 million in bus service contracts for the 4,000-student North Chicago Community Unit School District. The district has one of the highest low-income populations in Illinois. The guilty board member and four co-defendants grabbed more than \$9.6 million in the fraud scheme.

In Melrose Park, a police detective was arrested and charged with attempting to possess and distribute five kilograms of cocaine. The detective allegedly stole narcotics held in evidence by the Melrose Park Police Department and replaced it with fake narcotics. According to the complaint, the defendant was also charged with possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

A Kankakee County Sheriff's Deputy, who previously was Police Chief in Countryside, pleaded guilty to mail fraud, money laundering, and tax evasion. Timothy J. Swanson established a tax-exempt organization, Illinois Regional Air Support Service (IRASS), while working for the Kankakee County Sheriff's office. He collected contributions from various organizations and individuals. He then made personal purchases of more than \$ 259,000 using IRASS' credit card.

Former Highwood Fire Department Deputy Chief Ronald Pieri was found guilty of defrauding Highwood taxpayers out of \$70,000 by falsifying time records over four years by claiming compensation for hours that he did not actually work. He was found not guilty of official misconduct and theft of government property. At the time of his arrest in 2011, Pieri was the highest-ranking member of the Highwood Fire Department. After more than a year on paid administrative leave, the Fire and Police Commission in 2013 suspended him without pay.

A former Moecherville Water District Board President was charged with allegedly stealing \$33,597 in cash water payments and bank account funds. The board president of a not-

for-profit corporation that supplied water to households in Moecherville near Aurora, Illinois, was responsible for depositing customer's payments in the district's bank account. However, he allegedly converted to his own use funds that were designated to repay a federal program loan.

A former Dolton certified water operator was indicted for falsifying records to conceal his failure to properly sample drinking water for microbiological contaminants.

In the Village of Riverdale, a real estate developer was sentenced to 60 months in federal prison for defrauding Riverdale of over \$ 370,000. John Thomas, 52, of Chicago, the owner of Nosmo Kings LLC, entered into a TIF agreement with Riverdale in 2012. Thomas submitted false documents for construction expenses, including invoices and checks paid to vendors that never actually performed any activities at the marina. One such document was an invoice for \$25,750 for construction supplies from a company that was a currency exchange to which he owed money.

State Government Lawbreakers

Chicago and Cook County were not the only centers of political and public corruption in 2015. State government was a corruption hotbed as well.

As documented in the book *Corrupt Illinois*, the Prairie State has a long history of corruption. Illinois is the third most corrupt state in the nation and four of our last nine governors have served prison time. Former Governor Rod Blagojevich is the undisputed champion of modern Illinois corruption. He is the only governor to be impeached and thrown out of office even before his conviction in federal court. In 2015 he was still serving his fourteen year prison sentence.

However, in 2015 the new parade of felons and indicted officials was led by our less than illustrious state legislators. For instance, State Representative Derek Smith was sentenced in April to five months behind bars for pocketing \$7,000 to send a letter of support for a state grant for a day care center in his district. Smith, like Blagojevich, was impeached and expelled from the state legislature after his indictment. He was the first member of the legislature to be expelled in 107 years. Yet, the voters reelected him handily in 2012. He was only removed from office for good after his conviction.

Then former State Representative Connie Howard was sentenced to three months in prison after being convicted in 2013 for using \$28,000 taken from a charity for personal and

political purposes. The money was from a charity golf outing she sponsored to raise funds for student scholarships.

State Representative LaShawn Ford was the luckiest of the state representatives. He was found not guilty of 17 felony counts for lying about his income on a \$1.5 million business loan application. He pleaded guilty to filing a false federal tax return, but that was a misdemeanor which allowed him to remain in public office.

Finally, former State Representative Keith Farnham was sentenced to 96 months for child pornography.

These were not the only officials convicted for corruption in state and in local governments throughout the state. Many of the other convictions were for rigging contracts or stealing money directly. For instance, Leon and Karin Dingel were sentenced to prison after being convicted a year earlier of stealing \$3.4 million in Illinois Department of Public Health Grants. Quinshaunta Golden in the same department was sentenced to eight years in prison for falsifying \$13 million in grants and contracts in order to receive kickbacks from the recipients. Lesser officials in state government like a prison guard were sentenced to prison for schemes like identity theft in order to file illegal tax returns.

At the local government level, by far the most bizarre case was the suicide of Fox Lake Police Lt. Charles Gliniewicz, who killed himself while under investigation for stealing money from a youth program he ran. To hide his suicide, he staged the shooting to look like murder by three suspects he was tracking. Investigators suggested it was an attempt to cover up his own crimes.

Some of the other local government cases of corruption around the state include a former North Chicago School Board Member sentenced to 30 months in prison for bus contract fraud schemes.

Outside of the bigger schemes of governors and state legislators, most state and local officials were guilty of either contract rigging or stealing funds directly from our governments. Unfortunately, corruption is alive and well at all levels in Illinois.

Medical fraud in Illinois

Medical fraud is a white-collar crime that involves dishonest filling of medical claims or providing and billing for unnecessary medical treatments. This often affects elderly or disabled individuals who are recipients of federal or state medical benefits. Medical fraud schemes not only rip off the system, but also take advantage of vulnerable individuals and pose risks to their health.

In 2015, the Medicare Fraud Strike Force, which is part of the Health Care Fraud & Prevention Team, a joint initiative between the U.S. Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services, HHS, carried out one of the largest corruption investigations in its history. The operation took place in 17 districts throughout the United States, resulting in charges against 243 individuals, including 46 doctors and other licensed medical professions, who allegedly participated in fraud schemes involving approximately \$712 million in false billings.

Since its inception in 2007, Strike Force operations in nine states have charged over 2,300 defendants who collectively have falsely billed the Medicare program for more than \$7 billion.

In 2015, a number of cases were prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney of Northern District of Illinois and twelve individuals were charged. In the Guerrero, et. al. case, seven individuals who worked at three home health care companies were charged with \$45 million fraud between 2008 and 2014. The fraud as alleged included paying illegal bribes and kickbacks to obtain Medicare beneficiaries; ignoring doctors who refused to certify beneficiaries as “homebound” and eligible for care; enrolling patients who did not need or want the care; subjecting patients to pre-planned cycles of discharges and re-enrollments, regardless of their medical needs; and falsifying medical records to make patients appear to be homebound or sicker than they actually were.

Three other cases involved medical professionals also charged with health care fraud. In one, Zenaida Dimalig of Bensenville allegedly paid cash kickbacks to Medicare-covered patients, who, in turn, allowed their Medicare information to be used to bill Medicare for home-health services that these individuals did not need. Dimalig then passed on this Medicare information and records that falsely suggested that certain services were provided to Medicare beneficiaries to home health care agencies for the purpose of billing Medicare.

In another case Barry Fisher of River Forest, is alleged to have falsely certified patients as “confined to the home,” requiring skilled nursing services, and falsification of information in patient medical records.

In the third case, a Chicago dermatologist, Omeed Memar was indicted for health care fraud for allegedly billing cosmetic treatments fraudulently as the destruction of large numbers of pre-cancerous lesions. For a period of approximately six years between 2007 and 2013, Memar allegedly falsely diagnosed patients with actinic keratosis, ordered his staff to provide intense-pulsed light treatments for his patients, and instructed his staff to document the procedures falsely as the destruction of 15 or more precancerous lesions.

Other cases include: a \$6 million Medicare fraud and kickback scheme at a Chicago home health care practice; kickbacks by a Chicago psychiatrist for prescribing anti-psychotic drugs; Medicare fraud by a psychologist and psychotherapy services; false billing of Medicare by a suspended physician; health-care fraud by the owner of two nursing agencies that provided unnecessary services to Medicare beneficiaries; a Medicare kickback conspiracy by owner and executives at closed Sacred Heart Hospital; a \$ 23 million Medicare fraud conspiracy by leader of two health clinics ; the falsification of Medicaid Waiver Program bills by a personal assistant in the Home Services Program; a \$10.8 million fraud scheme by a Wheeling Chiropractic Group; and a \$2.5 million health care fraud by the owner and operator of health clinics located in Park Ridge and Skokie, Illinois.

The prevalence of such a large number of medical fraud cases is evidence that corrupt acts are not confined to elected officials but can be found in the various professions, the business class and among average working men and women.

Lack of Faith in Government

Public opinion polls show that only 25% of the public trust our state government. We have the lowest level of trust of any state. By comparison 81% of the residents of North Dakota have confidence in their state and its leadership. This loss of faith in government is not only caused by the budget stalemate in Springfield and lowered bond ratings in Chicago but by the astounding level of corruption from city hall to the state house to even doctor's offices.

Some strides were made this last year. Civics will now be required to be taught in school. The Chicago Inspector General is empowered to investigate charges of graft and corruption by Chicago aldermen and their staff members.

However, the high level of corruption we have documented in 2015 suggests that additional reforms are still needed such as:

- 1) Public funding of political campaigns.
- 2) A fair remap of all legislative districts.

- 3) Increased citizen participation in elections and government.
- 4) Strengthening Inspector Generals and creating a Suburban Inspector General.
- 5) Fundamental changes in the Chicago Police Department to create greater police accountability and oversight.
- 6) Preventing public officials from representing private individuals and corporations for profit before other units of government.
- 7) Making public information available in more useable forms on the internet in a structured, open and searchable manner.

In the day by day list of corruption that follows we demonstrate how the work of changing the culture of corruption in Illinois is more urgent than ever.

Corruption in Illinois 2015

Day by Day

January, 2015

Indicted/charged

Chicago police officers Scott Rooney, Joshua Almodovar, and Jesus Delgado were charged with battery and Sgt. Tracey Walczak and Officer Danielle Ferlito were accused of allegedly failing to "de-escalate an unprovoked attack on two men at a Golden Nugget restaurant in January, 2015.

-- Source: Mary Mitchell, Chicago Sun-Times, Jan. 21, 2016.

January 7, 2015

Sentenced

[Former Cook County Sheriff's Deputy Sentenced To 1 Year In Prison For Using Excessive Force Against Detainee In Maywood](#)

Rafael Munoz, a former Cook County Sheriff's deputy pleaded guilty in September 2014 for violating the civil rights of a detainee in Maywood July 2010. He attempted to cover up his use of excessive force by completing three false reports. -- Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release and *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 10, 2014

January 27, 2015

Convicted/Sentenced

"City supervisor pleaded guilty to selling confiscated cigarettes"

Abd Ayesh, a tax and license compliance supervisor in the Chicago Business Affairs and Consumer Affairs Dept. pleaded guilty to official misconduct and theft from BACP. According to prosecutors, Ayesh abused his position with the City to steal and sell more than \$2,000 worth of unstamped cartons of cigarettes confiscated by city inspectors. He was sentenced to two years probation.

-- Sources: *Chicago Sun-Times online*, Jan 27, 2015, and *Chicago OIG news release*, Jan. 28, 2015.

January 27, 2015

Convicted

Timothy J. Swanson, former Countryside Police Chief and later a Kankakee County Sheriff's deputy, pleaded guilty to mail fraud, money laundering, and tax evasion. He took \$259,000 in funds from a non-profit he established to provide the use of helicopters for law enforcement purposes. He used the money to buy a business and for personal purchases. On May 29, 2015, Swanson, a former head of the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, was sentenced to 27 months in federal prison. -- Sources: US Attorney-CDIL News Release and *Chicago Tribune*, May 30, 2015.

January 28, 2015

Investigation

“COD board reaffirms president's parachute”

The College of DuPage has had continual scandals throughout 2015 beginning in January with the approval of a retirement package of \$763,000 for former COD President Robert Breuder. This was followed by the election of new Board of Trustee members and an exposure of the apparent misuse of expense accounts at the campus' upscale Waterleaf restaurant which in 2012 had more than a \$500,000 deficit which had to be covered by the college. Since then the restaurant has been closed.

In April an election of three new members of the Board of Trustees created a new majority which has since attempted to rescind the retirement package. The Higher Learning Commission has forced a reevaluation of the college's accreditation which is necessary for the college to operate.

Since then one of the trustees has resigned and the Board remains mostly deadlocked, often unable to achieve a quorum even to meet. A number of different corruption investigations remain ongoing at the time this report is being written. Source-- *Chicago Tribune*, January 29, 2015

February 11, 2015

Convicted

[Former Federal Prison Chaplain Pleads Guilty To Passing Messages For Convicted Killer Frank Calabrese, Sr.](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

February 13, 2015

Convicted

[Chicago Psychiatrist Pleads Guilty To Taking Kickbacks To Prescribe Anti-Psychotic Drug: Will Also Pay U.S. And Illinois \\$3.79 Million](#) --Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

February 23, 2015

Sentenced

[Psychologist And Psychotherapy Services Owner Sentenced To Over Seven Years, And Employee Sentenced To Over Five Years In \\$1.5 Million Medicare Fraud](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

February 24, 2015

Sentenced

[Suspended Physician Sentenced To 1 ½ Years For Illegally Dispensing Oxycodone And Falsely Billing Medicare In Undercover Probe](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

March 4, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Two Executives Indicted For Scheming To Defraud Chicago And Other Governments Of Grant Funds Intended To Establish Charging Stations For Electric Vehicles](#)

The co-owners of 350Green LLC of Los Angeles, Mariana Gerzanych and Timothy Mason, obtained over \$2.9 million in federal and state grant funds from the City of Chicago, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and two California local government entities to install and maintain public electric vehicle charging stations. 350Green LLC allegedly made false claims that it paid subcontractors and vendors for electric battery chargers. The indictment seeks the forfeiture of approximately \$1.9 million. The investigation was conducted by several local, state, and federal authorities. -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

March 10, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Nurse Charged With Health-Care Fraud Scheme For Billing Medicare For Unnecessary Services](#)

The registered nurse defendant James Ademiju operated two nursing agencies - Adonis Inc. and BestMed-Care Services Ltd., both located in Dolton. The two agencies obtained many patients from a marketing company which claimed to offer “free” nursing services to Medicare beneficiaries. The complaint alleges a scheme to defraud Medicare by billing for unnecessary services that were provided to patients who were not confined to the home. Between February 2011 and December 2014, Medicare paid Adonis approximately \$1.9 million and BestMed-Care Services approximately \$3.1 million for skilled-nursing services. -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

March 13, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Physician Charged with Receiving a Kickback](#)

Neil Sharma, of Lemont, Illinois, a licensed Illinois physician and the medical director of an Illinois healthcare company, was charged with receiving \$2,500 in return for referring Medicaid and Medicare patients to the individual’s company for medical treatment. -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

March 17, 2015

Convicted

“Niles police officer found guilty”

William Christie, a former Niles police officer, was found guilty in Cook County Criminal Court of felony theft for stealing about \$1,500 from a man found dead at the Niles YMCA in 2009.

-- Source: Cook County State's Attorney News Release.

March 18, 2015

Investigation

“Congressman Schock resigns House seat”

U.S. Rep. Aaron Schock resigned from the House of Representatives after six weeks of intense scrutiny over possible misuse of campaign and office funds. The scrutiny followed series of news stories about his extravagant spending for travel, entertainment for his staff, and the use of nearly \$40,000 of taxpayers' funds to remodel his office like a "Downton Abbey" set. The Peoria area Congressman has been the target of a federal grand jury since April, 2015, but as of this writing he has not been indicted or charged with a crime. Schock's attorneys spent much of the second half of 2015 fighting with federal prosecutors over leaks, subpoenas and the delivery of documents. -- Sources: *Chicago Tribune*, March 18, 2015; *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 19 and *Chicago Sun-Times*, Nov. 28, 2015

March 18, 2015

Sentenced

[Chicago Revenue Inspector Sentenced To 12 Months Probation For Extortion](#)

Elias Garza, a City of Chicago revenue inspector, pleaded guilty in 2011 for accepting \$500 from a store owner who sold cigarettes for alerting the individual about upcoming city inspections to ensure proper payment of taxes on cigarettes. -- Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

March 19, 2015

Convicted

[Owner And Executives Convicted In Medicare Referral Kickback Conspiracy At Closed Sacred Heart Hospital](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

March 19, 2015

Sentenced

[Former Illinois State Representative Keith Farnham Sentenced To Ninety Six Months For Transporting Child Pornography](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

April 10, 2015

Indicted/charged

Donald McDaniels, a supervisor for the Cook County Health and Hospital System was charged with official misconduct and theft of government funds for allegedly pocketing proceeds for patients' medications. -- Source: Cook County State's Attorney News Release

April 10, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Melrose Park Police Department Detective Arrested For Possession With Intent To Distribute Cocaine And Illegal Firearm Possession](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

April 11, 2015

“City moves to settle lawsuit over police-involved shooting of Laquan McDonald”

The City Council's Committee on Finance will be asked to authorize a \$5 million settlement of a lawsuit brought by the estate of Laquan McDonald. Meanwhile, groups advocating for police accountability continue to be denied access to a videotape that may show McDonald's death was the result of an unjustified police shooting. A Chicago Police officer shot and killed McDonald in October 2014, at 41st and Pulaski. -- Source: Chicago Sun-Times, April 11, 2015

April 13, 2015

Investigation

[U.S. Attorney's Office And Cook County State's Attorney's Office Conducting Joint Investigation Of Police Shooting Death](#)

“State and federal investigation under way of deadly police shooting that costs taxpayers \$5 mil”

A City Council Committee agreed to pay \$5 million to the family of a black teenager shot 16 times by a Chicago Police officer — even before a lawsuit was filed — amid word that the fatal shooting of Laquan McDonald is the subject of a state and federal investigation.

-- Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release, and *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 13, 2015

“Alderman demands release of video of police officer shooting black teenager”

The chairman of the City Council's Black Caucus on Tuesday demanded the release of a potentially incendiary video showing a Chicago Police officer firing 16 shots into the body of slain African-American teenager Laquan McDonald. -- *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 14 2015

“City Council approves \$5 million settlement stemming from fatal police shooting”

Investigation

As an FBI investigation continues, the fatal police shooting of a knife-wielding black teenager on Wednesday triggered a \$5 million city settlement amid word that Laquan McDonald had PCP in his system when a Chicago Police officer shot him 16 times. -- *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 15 2015

“Sixteen Shots! 'Sixteen Shots! Hundreds of Protestors hit streets after release of video”

About 300 to 400 protestors angry about the killing of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald hit the streets on Tuesday evening, minutes after Chicago Police released the dashcam video of the slaying.

-- *Chicago Sun-Times*, Nov. 25, 2015

“Murder Charge for Cop in Teen's Shooting Death”

Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez charged police officer Jason Van Dyke with first-degree murder Tuesday, saying she made the announcement earlier than planned out of concern for "public safety."

-- *Chicago Tribune* and *Chicago Sun-Times* , Nov. 25, 2015

“Mayor Fires Top Cop”

Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy was dismissed by a mayor seeking to ease public outrage over the police video recording of a black teen shot 16 times by a white officer now charged with murder.

-- *Chicago Tribune*, Dec. 2, 2015

“Feds to Review Chicago Police Department”

Investigation

The U.S. Department of Justice will open a wide-ranging civil rights investigation into the Chicago Police Department after the release of a video of a patrol officer's fatal shooting Laquan McDonald and police reports from the officers on the scene that conflict with that video, sources told the Tribune.

-- *Chicago Tribune*, Dec. 7, 2015

“Van Dyke Indicted on 6 Murder Charges”

A grand jury returned an indictment against Officer Van Dyke on six murder charges and one count of official misconduct in the shooting death of Laquan McDonald. -- *Chicago Sun-Times*, Dec. 17 2015

Indicted/charged

“Van Dyke Pleads not guilty”

Chicago Police Officer, Jason Van Dyke pleaded not-guilty in his arraignment in Cook County Criminal Court. Earlier he posted the required 10 percent of a \$1.5 million bail. -- *Chicago Tribune*, Dec. 30, 2015

April 14, 2015

Convicted & Sentenced

“Ex-clerk pleads guilty to stealing”

Antionette Chenier, a clerk at the Chicago Department of Transportation and the Office of Emergency Management and Communications, pleaded guilty to stealing \$741,299 over five years by diverting checks for city permits to a non-city bank account that she controlled. In September, she was sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison. -- *Chicago Tribune*, April 15 and Sept. 10, 2015

April 14, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Former Moecherville Water District Board President Charged With Allegedly Stealing Water District Funds](#) -- Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release *Chicago Tribune*, April 15, 2015

April 15, 2015

Sentenced

Businessman Ronald Garcia, of Homer Glen Ill., was sentenced to three years in prison for paying a \$100,000 bribe to then Cook County Commissioner Joseph Mario Moreno in a scheme to obtain more county business. Sources: *Chicago Tribune*, April 15, 2015 and *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 15, 2015

April 15, 2015

Investigation

“Feds investigating \$20 million CPS contract and Byrd-Bennett's role”

Catalyst magazine and the Chicago Sun-Times reported that the FBI was investigating a \$20 million no-bid contract awarded by the Chicago Public Schools to a Wilmette company and what role CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett played in it. The investigation grew out of a report by Sarah Karp in Catalyst in July 2013, and a subsequent probe by the CPS Inspector General. Sources: *Catalyst* and *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 15, 2015, and *Chicago Tribune*, April 16, 2015

“Barbara Byrd-Bennett resigns amid federal probe” -- *Chicago Sun-Times*, June 1, 2015

Ex-CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett, 4 others charged in contract scheme

The former CEO of Chicago Public Schools has been criminally charged in connection with allegedly steering a \$20 million no-bid CPS contract to SUPES Academy, her former employer.

SUPES owners, Gary Solomon and Thomas Vranas, and SUPES and another company they owned were also charged. -- Source: *Chicago Sun-Times*, October 8, 2015

“Byrd-Bennett: Top educator pleads guilty”**Convicted**

Once Chicago's top educator, Barbara Byrd-Bennett is now a convicted felon. ... She pleaded guilty to a single count of wire fraud for steering some \$23 million in contracts to a former employer in exchange for a 10 percent kickback she wanted, in part, to go into a college fund for her twin grandsons. Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release and *Chicago Sun-Times*, October 13, 2015

“SUPES Academy co-owners Gary Solomon and Thomas Vranas indicted” Indicted/charged

“Barbara Byrd-Bennett co-defendants plead not guilty in kickback scheme”-- Source: *Chicago Tribune*, October 27, 2015

“Feds: Ex-CPS CEO 'fraudulently' steered \$40M contract in Detroit”

An FBI agent believed corrupt former CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett worked to "fraudulently steer" a \$40 million contract to one of the country's biggest educational publishers while she worked for the Detroit schools... -- Source: *Chicago Sun-Times*, Nov. 3, 2015

April 16, 2015

Indicted/charged

[PACE Department Manager Arrested For Allegedly Accepting More Than \\$280,000 In Kickbacks And Gratuities](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

April 17, 2015

Sentenced

[Leader Of A \\$23 Million Medicare Fraud Conspiracy Sentenced To 10 Years In Prison](#)

Jacinto “John” Gabriel, Jr., obtained confidential background information on hundreds of Medicare beneficiaries and used that information to sign them up as patients at two health clinics he controlled, Perpetual Home Health, Inc. and Legacy Home Healthcare Services. Patients were intentionally misdiagnosed and provided treatment for medical conditions which they did not have. Gabriel directed staff of these companies to falsify information about patient records and doctor’s orders in order to support Medicare claims. He also made payments to doctors and others for referring patients and signing doctor’s orders. -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

April 21, 2015

Sentenced

[Former North Chicago School Board Member Sentenced To 30 Months In Federal Prison For Bus Contracts Fraud Scheme](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

April 23, 2015

Sentenced

[Former Prison Guard Sentenced To 3 Years For Identity Theft Of Inmates For Purposes Of Filing Illegal Tax Returns](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

April 24, 2015 **“Ex-state Rep. Smith gets 5 months for bribery bust”**

Sentenced

A federal judge cut disgraced former state Rep. Derrick Smith a big break, sentencing him to just five months behind bars for pocketing a \$7,000 cash bribe. Smith, who was caught on tape accepting the cash bribe in exchange for a letter of support for a state grant application roughly a year after he'd been appointed to represent the 10th District in the Illinois House of Representatives, had made an emotional plea for mercy. -- Sources: *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 24, 2015 and *Chicago Tribune*, April 24, 2015

May 7, 2015 **“11th cop sentenced in tow truck bribery probe”**

Sentenced

A former veteran Chicago police officer was sentenced to a year in prison for his part in a scheme to extort tow truck drivers in return for steering business their way. Francis Zoller, 46, was the final defendant to be sentenced in the long-running FBI probe code-named Operation Tow Scam, which ensnared 11 police officers as well as several tow truck drivers in a plot to give towing jobs to bribe-paying drivers while shooing others away from accident scenes.

-- Source: *Chicago Tribune*, May 7, and US Attorney-NDIL News Release, May 6, 2015

May 13, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Postal Service Employees Arrested At O'Hare Airport For Opening And Stealing Contents From Packages Including Narcotics](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

May 14, 2015 **“4 named in warrants in CPS theft case”**

Investigation

Four people were named in arrest warrants tied to the theft of over \$876,000 from two Chicago Public Schools. Earlier this year, it was revealed that the Chicago Board of Education's inspector general was working with the Cook County State's Attorney's office to investigate the financial scams from schools identified as Gage Park and Michele Clark high schools. An unnamed school operations employee allegedly "orchestrated multiple fraudulent purchasing and reimbursement schemes" with CPS staffers and vendors between 2009 and 2014. In one instance, \$581,947 was paid to two business owners for goods and services "that were never actually provided." In another scam, a businessman kicked back more than \$111,000 to an employee in connection with \$216,000 worth of purchases. -- *Chicago Sun-Times*, May 14, 2015

May 15, 2015

[Sentenced](#)

Charlietta M. Lee, of Marion Ill., a personal assistant in the Home Services Program, was sentenced to five years probation for allegedly submitting false bills for personal assistance service for the Medicaid Waiver program. -- Source: US Attorney-SDIL News Release

May 23, 2015 **“Kickbacks get county worker prison time”**

[Convicted & Sentenced](#)

A former Cook County Forest Preserve District employee was sentenced to a year in prison for taking \$10,000 in kickbacks to steer contracts to a west suburban construction company owner who was working undercover for the FBI. Joseph Mollica, 54, of Elmwood Park, pleaded guilty in January to one count of bribery involving a public official. -- Source: *Chicago Tribune*, May 23, 2015

May 26, 2015

[Indicted/charged](#)

[Lockport Pharmacist Indicted For Allegedly Falsely Billing \\$2.4 Million For Prescription Claims](#)

Walter Beich, owner and licensed pharmacist at Lockport Pharmacy, Inc., operating as Corwin Pharmacy engaged in scheme to defraud various health care benefit programs for \$2.4 million. According to the indictment Beich filed fraudulent claims for prescriptions that were not dispensed to his customers or he had switched out for less-expensive supplements instead of FDA-approved prescription drugs. Additionally, he dispensed sample drugs and foreign-sourced drugs instead of prescription medications. -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

May 27, 2015

[Convicted](#)

[Chicago Area Psychologist Pleads In Nationwide Medicare Fraud Strike Force Takedown](#)

Sharon A. Rinaldi, a licensed psychologist, participated in a scheme to defraud the Medicare by submitting thousands of false claims for psychotherapy services to Medicare beneficiaries. Several ways in which Rinaldi falsified information include: claims that she provided services to individuals who were deceased at the time of service; at the time of service she was on the West Coast; inflating the number of hours worked in a single day, often suggesting she had worked over 24 hours in a single day. The total for the claims submitted for reimbursement was approximately \$ 1.1 million and Medicare paid at least \$447,155 in funds to which she was not entitled. -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

May 28, 2015

Sentenced

“Ex-chief of staff to Ald. Brookins gets 15 months for taking bribe”

A federal judge sentenced the silver-haired former chief of staff to Ald. Howard Brookins to 15 months in prison for taking a \$7,500 cash bribe at a 2013 Christmas party. Thompson admitted to the judge in December he helped an undercover federal informant secure letters of support from Brookins in 2013 for a 21st Ward liquor license. In exchange, the informant gave Thompson 75 \$100 bills stuffed inside a Christmas card at the alderman’s holiday party. Brookins, who has not been criminally charged and has repeatedly denied wrongdoing, was on a golf course during the sentencing. -- Sources: *Chicago Sun-Times*, May 28, 2015 and *Chicago Tribune*, May 28, 2015

May 28, 2015 **“Former Illinois Congressman Dennis Hastert Indicted”** Indicted/charged

[Former Speaker Of The United States House Of Representatives Charged With Structuring Cash Withdrawals To Evade Currency Transaction Reporting Requirements And Making False Statement To The FBI](#) -- Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

“Dennis Hastert pleads not guilty on all counts” -- CNN, June 9, 2015

“Sources: Hastert tied to sex claims” -- *Chicago Tribune*, June 16, 2015

“Hastert pleads guilty to keep secret under wraps” -- *Chicago Sun-Times*, Oct. 28, 2015

Convicted

[Statement by the U.S. Attorney's Office Following the Guilty Plea of Former U.S. House Speaker John Dennis Hastert](#) -- US Attorney-NDIL News Release, Oct. 28, 2015

“Hastert ill, sentencing postponed to April 8” -- *Chicago Tribune*, Jan. 29, 2016

June 1, 2015

Sentenced

[Health Care Provider Sentenced To 75 Months For \\$2.5 Million Health Care Fraud](#)

Ankur Roy, of Miami Beach, Florida, owner and operator of Selectcare Health Inc., a provider of outpatient physical and respiratory therapy located in Park Ridge and Skokie. Roy defrauded Medicare and Blue Cross Blue Shield of over \$2.5 million by submitting fraudulent insurance claims for services that were never provided. Roy and his co-defendants sought to avoid fraud-detection systems of insurance providers. -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

June 5, 2015

Indicted/charged

“Attorney indicted for tax fraud; Vrdolyak named as a witness”

Daniel Soso, a Chicago attorney has been charged with failing to pay nearly \$800,000 in federal income taxes, including for income he received in connection with the state of Illinois' lawsuit

against tobacco companies. Assistant U.S. Attorney Amarjeet Bhachu revealed that former Chicago Alderman Edward Vrdolyak is a witness in the case and asked U.S. District Judge Amy St. Eve to bar Soso, of Alsip, from having any contact with Vrdolyak while the case is pending. From 1993 through 2013, Soso failed to pay about \$780,000 in taxes, including taxes due from the income he received from his hidden arrangement with Individual A (said to be Vrdolyak) and with Individual B, according to the indictment. The indictment also alleges that Soso lied to the IRS about his sources of income and hid payments from the settlement. Vrdolyak was not charged with any wrongdoing. -- Sources: *Chicago Tribune*, May 28, 2015 and June 5, 2015 and US Attorney-NDIL News Release

June 11, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Former Dolton Certified Water Operator Charged With Falsifying Drinking Water Sampling Data](#) -- Philip Kraus, of Thornton, a former Dolton certified water operator falsified records to conceal that he was not sampling properly the drinking water from Dolton for microbiological contaminants such as coliform bacteria. He was supposed to follow the Environmental Protection Agency regulations that implement the Safe Drinking Act to prevent drinking water from being contaminated locally. -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

June 12, 2015

Sentenced

“Public Health administrator sentenced”

Former State Public Health administrator, Roxanne Jackson, was sentenced to 25 months in federal prison for bribery, participating in a kickback scheme and filing a false income tax return. She pleaded guilty in September 2014, to paying kickbacks to Quinshanta Golden, chief of staff of the Illinois Public Health Department -- Source: US Attorney-CDIL News Release (Springfield)

June 16, 2015

Investigation

“Feds focus on LAZ executive”

FBI agents filed an affidavit for a search warrant in February to search two email accounts tied to an executive of LAZ Parking who allegedly received \$90,000 in bribe payments to steer a \$22 million contract for (Chicago) parking meters to a favored company. -- Sources: *Chicago Sun-Times*, June 16, 2015 and *Chicago Sun-Times*, June 20, 2015

The Chicago Sun-Times reported, on February 2, 2016, that the executive was Felipe Oropesa, of Marietta, Ga., and that he was expected to plead guilty in federal court in Atlanta. Two days later, the paper reported that federal prosecutors alleged that George Levey, of Cale Parking Systems USA Inc., admitted that he paid \$90,000 to Oropesa, who helped him craft a bid for the Chicago contract.

-- Source: *Chicago Sun-Times*, Feb. 4, 2016

June 18, 2015

Indicted/charged

[12 Charged In Chicago As Part Of Largest National Medicare Fraud Takedown In History](#)

-- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

June 22, 2015 **“Former Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. goes home”**

Jackson Jr., former U.S. Representative from Illinois' 2nd Congressional District, had been in federal prison for 18 months after being convicted on Feb. 20, 2013 for conspiring with his wife, Sandi Jackson to divert \$750,000 in campaign funds for personal use. -- Sources: *Chicago Sun-Times*, June 23, 2015 and October 21, 2015; *Corrupt Illinois*, University of Illinois Press, 2015, and *Chicago Sun-Times and Chicago Tribune*, Feb. 21, 2013

June 23, 2015

Sentenced

“Former Illinois Public Health Chief of Staff Sentenced for Bribery, Kickback Scheme and Obstruction of Justice”

Quinshaunta Golden, of Homewood, a former chief of staff for the Illinois Department of Public Health was sentenced in federal court to eight years in prison for her part in a fraudulent multimillion-dollar grant scheme. Golden pleaded guilty in April 2014, to issuing more than \$11 million in falsified grants and \$2 million in contract funds in exchange for kickbacks. -- Sources: US Attorney-CDIL News Release, *State Journal-Register*, (Springfield), June 24, 2015, and *Chicago Sun-Times*, June 23, 2015

June 26, 2015

Indicted/charged

“Former US rep Mel Reynolds indicted on tax evasion”

Indictment: Ex-lawmaker Mel Reynolds failed to file tax returns for 4 years,” -- Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release, June 26, 2015 and *Chicago Tribune*, June 27, 2015

July 7, 2015

Sentenced

[Former Chicago Man Sentenced To 18 Months In Federal Prison For Accepting Cash To Help 80 People Avoid City Impound Fees](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

July 8, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Social Security Administration Benefits Authorizer And Four Others Charged In \\$1.9 Million Kickback Scheme](#)

Jayson Cruz, worked at the Social Security Administration’s Great Lakes Program Service Center in Chicago and fraudulently caused Social Security to issue \$1.9 million in payments to about 154 recipients between September 2009 and December 2013. Cruz and other defendants

recruited benefit recipients to receive additional payments in addition to what they were legitimately entitled to, then collecting the money from the recruited individuals. They also falsely claimed to be representatives of deceased beneficiaries. -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

July 8, 2015

Sentenced

[Marina Developer Sentenced To 60 Months In Federal Prison For Defrauding The Village Of Riverdale Of Over \\$370,000](#)

John Thomas, of Chicago, the owner of Nosmo Kings LLC, entered into a TIF agreement with Riverdale in 2012. Thomas falsely submitted documents identifying completed construction expenses, including invoices and checks paid to vendors that never actually performed any activities at the marina. In one case, he submitted an invoice for \$25,750 for construction supplies from a company that was a currency exchange to which he owed money. -- Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release and Chicago Sun-Times, July 8, 2015

July 21, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Accountant Charged With Embezzling Nearly \\$130,000 From The Illinois Medical District Commission](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

July 31, 2015

Sentenced

[Former Chief Operating Officer Of Sacred Heart Hospital Sentenced To 21 Months In Prison For Conspiring In Kickback Scheme](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

August 6, 2015

Indicted/charged

[CEO Of Chicago-Based Health Care Company Charged With Billing Medicare For Phony And Non-Existent Treatment Of The Elderly In \\$1.2 Million Scheme](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

August 20, 2015

Convicted

“Redflex exec pleads guilty to bribes for red light camera business”

As CEO of Redflex Traffic Systems Inc., Karen Finley funneled cash and other personal financial benefits to a Chicago official and his friend, knowing that the payments would help persuade the city to award red-light camera contracts to Redflex, according to Finley's plea agreement. -- Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release, Aug. 20, and Chicago Tribune, Aug. 21, 2015

“Karen Finley, Ex-CEO of red light camera vendor pleads guilty to Ohio bribe scheme”

-- Source: *Chicago Tribune*, June 19, 2015

“City sued red light camera firm ... seeks \$300 million for Redflex bribery scheme”

-- Source: *Chicago Tribune*, September 1, 2015

August 21, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Three Family Members In A Wheeling Chiropractic Group Indicted For Phony Billing And Unnecessary Treatment In \\$10.8 Million Fraud Scheme](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

August 27, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Owners And Nurses Of Chicago Home-Healthcare Company Among Seven Indicted In Medicare Fraud And Kickback Scheme](#)

Estrellita and Miguel Duquilla, the owners of HCN, a Chicago home-healthcare business, paid various amounts of money to employees and marketers in exchange to referring elderly and disabled patients to the company for unnecessary treatments. HCN also falsified information on patient files to make it seem that patients qualified for in-home treatment. Duquillas also made cash payments to Medicare beneficiaries in exchange for using their information for submitting fraudulent claims.

-- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

August 28, 2015 **“Former City Comptroller goes to prison”**

Sentenced

“Ex-Chicago Comptroller Amer Ahmad, who fled to Pakistan, heads to prison”

-- Source: *Chicago Tribune*, August 28, 2015

August 28, 2015

Sentenced

[West Suburban Dermatologist Sentenced To 7 Years In Federal Prison For Defrauding Medicare And Private Insurers Of \\$3.7 Million](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

September 1, 2015

Investigation

“Friends recall slain Fox Lake cop; manhunt widens”

Lt. Charles Joseph Gliniewicz was shot and killed Tuesday(Sept. 1) and an investigation was begun, which included viewing video from around the area where the Fox Lake officer was slain.

-- *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 2, 2015

“Lake County cops blast corner over release of information”

Lake County law enforcement blasted the county corner for releasing information about the death of a Fox Lake police officer, saying (the coroner's) comments have jeopardized the case.

-- *Chicago Sun-Times*, September 10, 2015

“Fox Lake cop death to be ruled a suicide: Sources”

Lake County officials are expected to announce tomorrow that the death of Fox Lake Police Lt. Charles Joseph Gliniewicz was a suicide related to personal issues and an ongoing law enforcement investigation of him, sources said. -- *Chicago Sun-Times*, November 4, 2015

“Officer's death 'carefully staged suicide' - Authorities say police lieutenant who ran youth program was stealing money” -- *Chicago Sun-Times*, November 5, 2015

September 2, 2015

Sentenced

Police Department civilian employee, Pamela Brown, was sentenced to two years in prison. She was convicted earlier for stealing money and personal property from CPD's evidence section inventories. -- Source: Cook County State's Attorney News Release

September 5, 2015 **“Fire Department dispatcher pleads guilty to DUI”**

Convicted

Charles Reed, a Chicago Fire Department dispatcher was arrested by Gary police and was charged with speeding and driving while intoxicated. He pleaded guilty and was given a suspended sentence. -- Sources: Chicago Tribune, Jan. 21, 2016

September 8, 2015

Convicted

[West Suburban Doctor Pleads Guilty to Causing \\$4 Million Loss to Medicare by Falsely Approving Unnecessary Treatment](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

September 8, 2015

Convicted

“Cook County Sheriff's police officer pleads guilty”

"Ex-Cook sheriff's cop admits to ripping off dealers," -- Sources: US Attorney-NDIL News Release, and *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 10, 2015

September 12, 2015

Investigation

“Campaign donor paid salary of Rep. Bobby Rush’s niece”

A Chicago Sun-Times and the Better Government Association investigation revealed that Angelique Chatman, a niece of Congressman Bobby Rush was being paid by a wealthy contributor to Rush's campaign. The Sun-Times and BGA said the businessman, Timothy Rand, has for years had a lucrative deal with City Hall to operate numerous restaurants at Midway Airport. The Sun-Times and BGA suggested that the arrangement could be a violation of congressional ethics rules. The Office of Congressional Ethics began an investigation but the results have not been published. City officials said that it doesn't appear that the arrangement between Chatman and Rand's company violated either its lease or city rules. -- Source: *Chicago Sun-Times*, Sept. 12, 2005

September 22, 2015

Sentenced

[Former Employee of Social Security Administration Sentenced to 21 Months in Federal Prison for Cashing Her Deceased Mother's Social Security Checks](#)

-- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

September 22, 2015

Convicted

[Former Owner of Edgewater Medical Center Pleads Guilty to Perjury for Willfully Impeding Efforts to Collect \\$188 Million in Civil Judgments](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

September 18, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Former Clerk at Cook County Recorder of Deeds Indicted for Accepting Cash Bribe in Exchange for Preparing Fraudulent Real Estate Deed](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

October 14, 2015

Sentenced

[Former Owner of Edgewater Medical Center Sentenced to 21 Months for Willfully Impeding Efforts to Collect \\$188 Million in Civil Judgments](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

October 15, 2015

Investigation

“Hiring, ‘Pay To Play’ Part Of Dorothy Brown Probe”

Under investigation for well over a year for possible corruption, Cook County Circuit Court Clerk Dorothy Brown is facing more scrutiny from law enforcement, including a federal probe

focusing in part on personnel decisions made by her office. One source said the U.S. attorney's office in Chicago has an active grand jury looking into Brown's conduct, including loans she may have received from employees "in connection to employment." Another source relayed being interviewed by the FBI more than a year ago, saying, "They asked me about personnel stuff, was somebody paying for a job . . . why was this person promoted . . . pay to play." -- BGA, FOX TV 32 and *Chicago Sun-Times*, Oct. 15, 2015

October 20, 2015

“Ex-Alderman Sandi Jackson enters prison camp”

Former Chicago Ald. Sandi Jackson, (7th Ward) entered a federal prison camp in West Virginia after she was convicted in February 2013, for conspiring to commit wire fraud, mail fraud and making false statements. -- *Chicago Tribune*, Oct. 21, 2015 and *Corrupt Illinois*, University of Illinois Press, 2015

October 23, 2015

Convicted

[CEO of Chicago Healthcare Company Pleads Guilty to Fraudulently Billing Medicare in \\$1.8 Million Scheme](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

October 23, 2015

Convicted

Aldo Brown, a tactical Chicago Police Officer, was found guilty of using excessive force in the beating of a south side suspect in 2012 in the South Shore Neighborhood of Chicago. - Source: *Chicago Tribune*, October 10, 2015

November 9, 2015

Convicted

[Former Religious Services Worker at Federal Jail Pleads Guilty to Passing Unauthorized Information and Benefits to Inmates](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

November 10, 2015

Indicted/charged

John Gorman, an off-duty Chicago police officer, has been charged with aggravated discharge of a firearm for allegedly being under the influence of alcohol firing several shots at two men, including a suburban police officer. -- Source: Cook County State's Attorney News Release

November 12, 2015

Indicted/charged

Lashondra Peebles, a Chicago State University administrator, was charged with fraud and official misconduct for hiring her mother in a "ghost payroll" scam and for steering a consulting contract to a friend. Shirley Kyle, Lashondra Peebles' mother, was charged with theft by

deception for accepting payment for work that wasn't performed. -- Source: Cook County State's Attorney News Release

November 19, 2015

Convicted

[Former Chicago Police Sergeant Pleads Guilty to Passing Government Information to Store Clerk in Exchange for Cash Payments](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

November 20, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Glenview Man Indicted for Lying to Federal Grand Jury Investigating Possible Hiring Violations in Cook County Circuit Court Clerk's Office](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

November 23, 2015

Chicago Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy said he will recommend the firing of Officer Dante Servin, who was acquitted in April after being charged with involuntary manslaughter for shooting over his shoulder from his car at several individuals and killing Rekia Body. The termination of Officer Servin employment with the Police Department had not been announced by the end of the year.

-- Source: Chicago Sun-Times, November 24, 2015

November 23, 2015

Convicted

[Accountant Pleads Guilty to Embezzling More Than \\$130,000 from Illinois Medical District Commission](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

November 25, 2015

Convicted

Alfreda E. Perkins, of East Saint Louis, Ill., pled guilty to charges that she engaged in a scheme to steal from a Medicaid Waiver Program. She admitted submitting false bills for her alleged performance of personal assistant services. -- Source: US Attorney-SDIL News Release

December 4, 2015

Convicted

[Former Corrections Officer Pleads Guilty to Smuggling Marijuana and Alcohol into Cook County Jail](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

December 11, 2015

Indicted/charged

[Owner of Harwood Heights Home Health Care Company Indicted in Medicare Fraud and Kickback Scheme](#) -- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

December 14, 2015

Sentenced

Former State Rep. Howard sentenced to 3 months in prison, according to the U.S. Attorney's office in Springfield Illinois. Connie Howard (D-Chicago) pleaded guilty in July 2013 to soliciting \$76,700 for scholarships through a charity golf outing and pocketing about \$28,000 -- Sources: Chicago Tribune, Dec. 14, 2015

December 14, 2015

Sentenced

Chicago Couple Sentenced for Multi-Million Dollar State Grant Fraud Scheme Leon Dingle Jr., 77 and Karin Dingle, 75, were convicted in Federal Court in Springfield, Illinois, on Dec. 17, 2014. They were sentenced to federal prison for stealing \$3.4 million of Illinois Department of Public Health grants. -- Sources: *Chicago Tribune* and *Chicago Sun-Times*, Dec. 15, 2015; US Attorney-CDIL News Release and NBC News Chicago/AP story, Dec, 18, 2014

December 15, 2015

Convicted

Ronald Pieri, Deputy Chief of the Highwood Fire Department, was found guilty of defrauding Highwood taxpayers out of \$70,000 in pay, lost time and benefits by falsifying time records.

-- Lake County News Sun, December 16, 2015.

December 15, 2015

Convicted

Caryn Benson, an employee in the Field Museum membership office, has been charged with embezzlement in a one-count information filed by the U.S. Attorney. The museum said an investigation revealed that the theft, carried out over seven years, may have exceeded \$900,000. In court on Jan. 4, 2016, Benson pleaded guilty to only stealing \$410,000. A federal judge is scheduled to decide which dollar amount is correct at Benson's sentencing hearing in August.

-- Sources: *Chicago Sun-Times*, Dec. 16, 2015 and Jan. 5, 2016

December 16, 2015

Convicted

"Former Federal Correctional Officer Pleads Guilty to Bribery."

Melissa Gilmer, of Tremont, Ill, pleaded guilty to bribery. She admitted that while working as a correctional officer at the Federal Correctional Institution in Pekin, Ill., she provided contraband tobacco and a cell phone to an inmate and in exchange she received about \$6,000 from the inmate's family. -- Source: US Attorney-CDIL News Release

December 16, 2015

Sentenced

Terry L. Waeltermann Jr., of Mulberry Grove and Vandalia, Illinois, was sentenced to four months home confinement and two years probation after being convicted for his role in a scheme to steal more than \$6,660 from a Medicare Waiver program. -- Source: US Attorney-SDIL News Release

December 17, 2015

[Readout of Department of Justice's First Meetings in Chicago Following Announcement of Pattern or Practice Investigation of Chicago Police Department](#)

-- Source: US Attorney-NDIL News Release

December 29, 2015

Indicted/charged

Brandin Fredericksen, a Lynwood police officer, was charged with aggravated battery and official misconduct for allegedly punching a handcuffed man in the face in the garage of the Lynwood police station in 2013. -- Sources: Cook County State's Attorney News Release.