

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
MIDDLE DISTRICT *of* FLORIDA**Former Defense Contractor Pleads Guilty To Paying Bribes In Iraq**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2015

Tampa, FL – United States Attorney A. Lee Bentley, III announces that Ankana Pecault Stovall (47, Riverview) has pleaded guilty to an indictment charging her with conspiracy to pay gratuities and supplement the salary of members of the U.S. military in order to gain favorable contracting treatment in Iraq. She faces a maximum penalty of five years in federal prison. A sentencing date has not yet been set. The indictment also notifies Stovall that the United States is seeking a money judgment in the amount of \$19,500.

Two co-conspirators, U.S. Army Master Gunnery Sergeant Timothy Lerone Benton (Virginia) and U.S. Army First Sergeant Richard Allen Smith (Delaware), previously pleaded guilty in federal court in Tampa to accepting gratuities from Stovall during their time in Iraq in exchange for preferential contracting treatment for Stovall and her associated contracting companies.

According to court documents, between June 2007 and October 2009, Stovall was working for a defense contractor in Iraq and operating her own Riverview-based contracting company, Logistics Support and Services Company ("LSS"), which were both doing business with the U.S. military on Camp Liberty in Baghdad. Stovall was involved in a personal and financial relationship with Benton, who used his official position in Iraq to benefit Stovall, LSS, and Stovall's employer by escorting trucks loaded with furniture, gravel, and other supplies through Camp Liberty to circumvent the required security procedures on the base. For his assistance, Stovall would pay Benton cash. Benton also assisted Stovall and LSS in receiving cash purchase orders for supplies through his unit at Camp Liberty, including two 47-inch LCD televisions for \$6,400 and 100 digital cables for \$5,500. After Benton returned from Iraq, Stovall used LSS funds to pay for a vacation to the Bahamas for her and Benton. Later that year, she gave Benton a \$5,000, no-interest loan. In early 2010, Benton used his official position at the Pentagon to draft two official memoranda sponsoring and endorsing Stovall and LSS to conduct business on Camp Liberty.

In addition to the payments to Benton, Stovall regularly made cash payments in the amount of \$3,000 to Smith on behalf of her employer. Smith was the U.S. government employee in charge of the motor pool on Camp Liberty and was responsible for assigning military vehicle maintenance work to contractors. On multiple occasions, Stovall made cash payments to Smith to ensure that her employer would receive favorable treatment and contracts to perform work at the motor pool.

This case was investigated by the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, the United States Army – Criminal Investigation Command, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Josephine W. Thomas.