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### Adoption Scam Lands City Pair In Prison For 27 Months

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 8, 2011

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma – Today, SERENA CAROL MATHEWS, 42, and SCOTT THOMAS SMITH, 34, both of Oklahoma City, were each sentenced to serve 27 months in prison by United States District Judge Robin J. Cauthron for conspiracy to defraud in connection with an adoption scam, announced Sanford C. Coats, United States Attorney for the Western District of Oklahoma. Judge Cauthron also ordered that Mathews and Smith each serve three years of supervised release upon their release from prison and be jointly responsible to pay \$36,930.49 in restitution to their victims.

Mathews and Smith were indicted on June 22, 2010, where it was alleged that from November of 2010 to June of 2011 they conspired to defraud prospective adoption providers (i.e. law firms specializing in adoption and adoption agencies) and adoptive parents in order to obtain money. As part of their conspiracy, the defendants agreed Mathews would falsely pose as a pregnant woman who wished to place her child for adoption and receive money for expenses of the "birth mother" such as rent, utilities, food and other personal items. Mathews received and filled out a number of adoption application forms using false information regarding her personal identification, the conception of a child, the identity of the "birth father," and false medical documentation such as a positive pregnancy test, blood work and ultrasound pictures of an unborn child. Smith created false documents for Mathews to use in this scheme, including Oklahoma drivers licenses created in the false names used by Mathews and false rental leases. The defendants used the adoption providers to arrange meetings between Mathews and prospective adoptive couples who hoped to adopt a baby. The adoption providers entered into an agreement with Mathews to place her purported unborn child with an adoptive family and to cover certain expenses on her behalf such as rent, utilities and living expenses. The rent checks were to be made payable to her "landlord," Scott Smith, who was not her landlord but rather her boyfriend.

On August 1, 2011, both Matthews and Smith pled guilty to the conspiracy. Following the sentencing hearing today, both defendants were remanded into custody to begin serving their 27-month prison sentence.

This case was the result of an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Susan Dickerson Cox and Kerry Kelly.

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