



U.S. Department of Justice

***United States Attorney
Eastern District of Arkansas***

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**FORMER UCA PRESIDENT PLEADS GUILTY TO
WIRE FRAUD AND MONEY LAUNDERING**

Little Rock -- Christopher R. Thyer, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas; Valerie Parlave, Special Agent-In-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); and Hubbard Burgess, Acting Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division-Nashville Office; announced that Luther B. Hardin, 58, of West Palm Beach, Florida entered felony guilty pleas on Monday, March 7, 2011, before United States District Judge James Moody. Hardin waived a presentation of the case to the Grand Jury, and agreed to plead guilty to a felony Information filed by the United States Attorney. The Information and guilty plea stem from his role as President of the University of Central Arkansas in 2008, when he received \$300,000 in deferred compensation early from the University, and his subsequent spending of some of that money.

"As President of UCA, Mr. Hardin was in a position of public trust. He abused that position to the detriment of the University of Central Arkansas, the State of Arkansas, and the United States of America," stated Thyer. "Public office is not a blank check to self-enrichment for those in power. My office has, and will continue to, aggressively investigate and prosecute those who use their official status to receive illegal financial gain."

"Corrupt schemes involving abuses of a public official's position undermine public confidence," added FBI Special Agent in Charge Valerie Parlave. "We will continue to root out such schemes committed by those entrusted with public funds."

"IRS Criminal Investigation's role in these types of investigations is to provide our financial expertise. We are uniquely qualified to assist our federal law enforcement partners in following the money trail," stated Hubbard Burgess, Acting Special Agent in Charge, IRS

Criminal Investigation-Nashville Field Office.

Luther B. Hardin pled guilty to one count of wire fraud and one count of money laundering. The maximum statutory penalty for wire fraud is not more than 20 years imprisonment and/or not more than a fine of \$250,000 with 3 years of supervised release. The maximum statutory penalty for money laundering is not more than 10 years imprisonment and/or not more than a fine of \$250,000 with 3 years of supervised release. Sentencing will be set by the court at a later date.

This investigation was conducted by special agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation with the assistance and cooperation of the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division. Assistant. U. S. Attorneys Patrick Harris and Angela Jegley represented the United States.

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