

Two sentenced in voter fraud cases

By Marie Rohde, *Journal Sentinel*, Inc

Published on: 4/16/2009

The promise of \$40 a day, not politics, motivated two young people to commit election fraud in the run up to last fall's presidential election, according to court testimony this week. While not a single fraudulent vote was cast as a result, judges said the two chipped away at the foundation of American democracy.

'You were undercutting the faith in the electoral system,' Milwaukee County Circuit Judge Thomas Donegan told Endalyn Adams, 22, as he sentenced her Thursday. 'What you did raises the question of how many others are there out there? It's like a cockroach – if you see one, you know there are hundreds of others.'

Milwaukee County Circuit Judge William Brash made similar comments to Adam Mucklin, also 22, when he sentenced him on Wednesday.

'These cases are extremely serious because of what they represent,' Brash said. 'It is pivotal that if this union, this democracy is going to survive, that this right be guarded.'

Both Adams and Mucklin worked for Community Voters Project registering voters last year, and were charged in the wake of a joint state and local investigation into possible voter fraud after the fall election.

Adams told Donegan she was working full-time at another job when she signed up as a special registration deputy. She said she was paid \$40 a day and had to get at least 15 signatures a day. She had the job for two weeks but had trouble making her quota, she said.

So she just made up information about new voters on the forms, she said.

Adams, who had pleaded guilty in February, was convicted of being a party to the crime of falsely procuring voter registration information, a felony.

Her attorney, Russell Bohach, noted that his client had lost a lot already: He said she had been accepted to at a local college and had a full scholarship. In part because of the criminal charges, she has had to delay enrollment.

Adams said she has taken care four siblings, ages 7 to 17, for the past nine months because their mother is in jail.

'She intends to get her college education in civil engineering but it would have been paid for if this had not happened,' Bohach said. 'This will also affect the kinds of jobs she can and can not get. A felony conviction will have a chilling effect on that.'

Donegan said he initially intended to send Adams to jail but her circumstances affected his decision. He sentenced her to three years probation and 75 hours of community service. If she violates her probation, she will serve three years in jail followed by three years of extended supervision.

Mucklin was convicted Wednesday of attempting to register to vote as a felon and attempting to lie to the Milwaukee Election Commission so he could become a special

registration deputy.

Mucklin had pleaded guilty in April 2008 to a felony, substantial battery, and battery, a misdemeanor, and signed a court document acknowledging that the conviction stripped him of his voting rights.

Mucklin, a college student before he was sent to prison in July on the battery, said he was approached and asked to register to vote on the east side. He said he signed the form and then went to City Hall and was trained as a special registration deputy and worked with the Community Voter Project.

Edward Hunt, Mucklin's attorney, said the election law violations were the result of bad judgment rather than 'someone trying to run a scam.' Mucklin apologized for his actions.

Brash rejected state and defense recommendations of probation and sentenced Mucklin to four months in the House of Correction on the first count. On the second, he stayed a consecutive seven-month sentence and gave Mucklin a year's probation.