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Western District of Oklahoma

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

University Professor and Wife Plead Guilty to Offenses Involving Department of Energy Grants

OKLAHOMA CITY – Yesterday, **JUAN LU**, 57, of Norman, pleaded guilty to making a false statement regarding Department of Energy grants, announced Acting U.S. Attorney Robert J. Troester. Her husband, **SHAORONG LIU**, 58, of Norman, already pleaded guilty to using false documents in the same case.

On February 18, 2021, a federal grand jury returned a 16-count Superseding Indictment against Liu and Lu. According to the Superseding Indictment, Liu is employed as a professor at the University of Oklahoma Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. Liu and Lu controlled a company called MicroChem Solutions (MCS). Through MCS, they applied for and received federal grant monies from the Small Business Technology Transfer Program of the Department of Energy. The mission of the grant program was to support scientific excellence and technological innovation through the investment of federal research funds in critical American priorities to build a strong national economy. Liu and Lu spent this grant money on matters unrelated to the purpose of the grant funding, including on personal expenses. Additionally, Liu and Lu made false statements and submitted altered documents to the Department of Energy regarding how they spent grant money.

Yesterday, Lu pleaded guilty to using documents containing materially false statements regarding a matter pertaining to the executive branch of the United States government, namely the Department of Energy. On April 21, 2021, Liu pleaded guilty to making a materially false statement regarding a matter pertaining to the executive branch of the United States government, namely the Department of Energy.

At sentencing, Liu and Lu each face a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison and a potential fine of \$250,000.

This case is a result of investigations by the Department of Energy Office of Inspector General, the National Science Foundation Office of Inspector General, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation Oklahoma City Field Office. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Will Farris and Matt Dillon are prosecuting the case.

Reference is made to court filings for more information.

Component(s):

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