



# NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General  
**Catherine Leahy Scott**

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## **CUNY MEDGAR EVERS PROFESSOR FACING FEDERAL FRAUD CHARGES FOR THEFT FROM SCHOOL, HOLDING UNAUTHORIZED COURSES AND SELLING BOGUS MEDICAL COURSE COMPLETION CERTIFICATES TO JOB SEEKERS**

*Biology Professor Used Medgar Evers Facilities and Name without Authorization, Faked School Certificates for His Own Fraudulent Medical Career Training Enterprise and Pocketed Course Fees Paid by Students*

NEW YORK CITY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott and Joon H. Kim, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and Assistant Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General Northeastern Regional Office Debbi Mayer today announced the arrest of a City University of New York (“CUNY”) Medgar Evers College biology professor on federal corruption and fraud charges alleging that he operated unauthorized health industry courses in college facilities and sold bogus course completion certificates as if students attended and completed the college’s official programs.

Mamdouh Abdel-Sayed, 68, of Kearny, New Jersey, was arrested today on federal charges in Manhattan including one count of conversion from a program receiving federal funds and one count of soliciting bribes, each of which carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison, and one count of wire fraud, one count of mail fraud, and one count of obstruction of justice, each of which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison.

The charges allege that from at least 2013 through 2017, Abdel-Sayed, a full-time lecturer in the college’s biology department, operated unauthorized medical and health-related courses and sold bogus Medgar Evers College course completion certificates through a fraudulent scheme in which he profited from the school’s name and helped those who bought the certificates try to obtain employment without the requisite training. He held his classes in vacant college classrooms when the facilities were less busy, sold bogus certificates of completion to students and undercover investigators, whether they took the classes or not, and kept holding classes and selling certificates through 2017 even after college officials instructed him in 2015 and 2016 to cease and desist.

“This defendant ignored repeated warnings and still brazenly abused the name and resources of his college employer to operate what amounted to his own fraudulent trade school on the grounds of the City University of New York,” said **Inspector General Leahy Scott**. “He traded on the reputation of Medgar Evers College and pocketed all the fees students paid while undercutting legitimate schooling being performed by his colleagues across the campus. I will continue my overarching and ongoing investigation into the management and oversight of CUNY campuses while diligently pursuing anyone, as in this case, who violates the trust of their public position.”

“As alleged, a faculty member of Medgar Evers College abused his position to enrich himself by creating and selling fake certificates stating students had completed health care programs at the college. In allegedly doing so, Abdel-Sayed out of greed put public health at risk,” said **Acting Manhattan U.S. Attorney Kim**. I want to thank our partners at the New York State Inspector General and Department of Education Office of Inspector General for their continued efforts to root out corruption at federally funded New York schools.”

“Today's action alleges that Mr. Abdel-Sayed not only abused his position of trust for personal gain, but did so at the expense of students. That is unacceptable,” said **Debbi Mayer, Assistant Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General Northeastern n Regional Office**. “OIG will continue to aggressively pursue those who misappropriate education funds for their own purposes. America's students and taxpayers deserve nothing less.”

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott and the United States Department of Education Office of the Inspector General, found that Abdel-Sayed advertised and held unauthorized health-care classes including Phlebotomy (the practice of drawing blood from patients for the purposes of medical or clinical testing), Electrocardiograms (“EKG”), Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (“CPR”), Sonography, and Patient Care Technician (“PCT”) in Medgar Evers College classrooms. He charged students between \$25 and \$1,000 for bogus Medgar Evers College course completion certificates he created with stationery he purchased and embossed, and he assisted those who paid for certificates to obtain employment in the health care industry by vouching for the bogus certificates’ authenticity. Often, minimal or no actual training was performed, the classes included no textbooks, and students were not graded. Abdel-Sayed would provide his bogus certificates to students even if they did not attend his course, and he kept the payments from students for himself.

Additionally, Abdel-Sayed informed students that certain of his certificates served as prerequisites for other certificates, which students could purchase for additional cost. For example, he informed students that if they had purchased his EKG, Phlebotomy and CPR programs, then the students were eligible to purchase PCT certificates or Medical Assistant certificates.

Many of Abdel-Sayed’s classes were held in direct competition with, and at a deep discount to, authorized certified courses offered by Medgar Evers College’s School of Professional and Community Development. That school, under its Adult and Continuing Education programs, offers non-credit certificate courses in multiple areas, including Phlebotomy, Electrocardiograms, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, and Certified Nursing Assistant. The school charges students between \$85 for a one-day CPR class to \$495 for a 27-hour course on Phlebotomy or EKG, to \$2,530 for a 200-hour certificate-bearing PCT class.

Abdel-Sayed has never been authorized to teach any classes on behalf of the College for compensation regarding EKGs, Phlebotomy, CPR, Sonography, and PCT, or to issue certificates on behalf of the College representing completion of those courses. None of the fields Abdel-Sayed issued bogus certificates for require licensing in New York State.

Abdel-Sayed became aware of the criminal investigation into his activities this summer when his office was searched and materials to make the bogus certificates were found. Subsequently, he contacted a student (who happened to be an undercover investigator) who had purchased certificates from him and asked the certificates be returned. He also asked that student to refrain from talking to law enforcement regarding his activities and to “take the Fifth (Amendment)” if questioned, or to tell law enforcement that they took only Pathophysiology with Abdel-Sayed, a biology course he is authorized to teach which involves no certificates or job placement processes.

Inspector General Leahy Scott’s investigation into Abdel-Sayed’s activities arose from her ongoing investigation into CUNY’s oversight and management of its campuses, among other issues.

Abdel-Sayed was is expected to appear in United States District Court in Manhattan later today.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the United States Department of Education's Office of the Inspector General for their assistance with the investigation and Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York Joon H. Kim and his office for prosecuting this matter.

The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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