

**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Massachusetts

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

## **Former Chief Operating Officer of Global Premier Soccer Pleads Guilty in Visa Fraud Scheme**

BOSTON – The former Chief Operating Officer of Global Premier Soccer (GPS), a now defunct youth soccer organization formerly based in Waltham, Mass., pleaded guilty today in connection with a wide-ranging visa fraud conspiracy.

Justin Capell, 39, of Southborough, Mass., pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit visa fraud. U.S. Senior District Court Judge Rya W. Zobel scheduled sentencing for June 23, 2021.

According to court documents, from at least 2016 to October 2019, Capell conspired with other GPS executives and employees, and with GPS's outside counsel, to defraud several federal agencies by submitting fraudulent visa petitions in order to secure work visas for hundreds of GPS employees.

Specifically, it is alleged that Capell and his co-conspirators arranged to file fraudulent visa petitions on behalf of at least seven professional soccer teams in order to secure visas for GPS's foreign coaching staff. The petitions falsely stated that the beneficiaries would be working as scouts or assistant coaches for the professional teams when in reality they were employed only as youth soccer coaches by GPS. As part of the conspiracy, Capell and, allegedly, others, submitted phony employment contracts between professional teams and the purported beneficiaries. It is also alleged that Capell and co-conspirators created fraudulent coaching licenses for the beneficiaries, which were included as part of the visa application packages. A second facet of the conspiracy involved the filing of fraudulent visa petitions for foreign workers who were scheduled to work for GPS affiliates in one part of the country, but who were sent to work in different parts of the United States.

In some instances, it is alleged that conspirators directed visa beneficiaries to mislead U.S. immigration officials – providing them with detailed instructions on how to answer questions during their visa interviews.

In May 2020, Gavin MacPhee, a former GPS employee, pleaded guilty to destroying records in connection with this investigation.

The charging statute provides for a sentence of up to five years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge are based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; William S. Walker, Acting Special Agent in Charge, Homeland Security Investigations in Boston; Michael Mikulka, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigation, New York Regional Office; and Jonathan Davidson, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security Service, Boston Field Office made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was also provided by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Fraud Detection and National Security Unit in Vermont. HSI's Document & Benefit Fraud Task Force, a specialized investigative group comprised of various local, state and federal agencies, conducted this investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Mackenzie A. Queenin and Jordi de Llano, Deputy Chief of Mendell's Securities, Financial & Cyber Fraud Unit, are prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The co-conspirators are presumed innocent unless and until charged and proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

**Component(s):**

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