

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of New Jersey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, April 13, 2022

**Four Individuals Charged with Conspiring to Launder
Money Obtained from Romance Scams**

NEWARK, N.J. – Four individuals were charged with conspiring to launder money taken from victims across the United States, many of whom were elderly, as a part of a series of romance scams, U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger announced today.

William Kwabena Goeh, 47, of Somerset, New Jersey; Nana Yaw Marfo, 37, of Virginia; and Shannon Braxton, 45, and Chevon Braxton, 42, both of Maryland, are each charged by complaint with one count of money laundering conspiracy. Goeh was arrested this morning in New Jersey, had his initial appearance by videoconference before U.S. Magistrate Judge James B. Clark III, and was released on \$100,000 unsecured bond.

Marfo was arrested this morning in Virginia and is scheduled to have his initial appearance this afternoon before the U.S. Magistrate Judge Ivan Davis in the Eastern District of Virginia. The Braxtons were both arrested this morning in Maryland and are scheduled to have their initial appearances before U.S. Magistrate Judge Gina L. Simms in the District of Maryland. Marfo and the Braxtons are scheduled to have their initial appearances in the District of New Jersey on.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

The defendants used bank accounts and accounts at credit unions to launder the proceeds of money obtained by victims of romance scams. Several victims throughout the United States fell victim to romance scams after meeting individuals online who they thought were interested in a romantic relationship. The victims, many of whom were elderly, sent thousands of dollars to accounts controlled by Goeh, Marfo, the Braxtons, and others, believing the money was being sent for the benefit of their online romantic interest. Goeh and Marfo opened up business bank accounts in the names of various entities to conceal the romance scam fraud proceeds. Goeh received at least \$530,000; Marfo received at least \$4.7 million; Shannon Braxton received at least \$500,000; and Chevon Braxton received at least \$1.3 million. The Braxtons withdrew a large portion of the fraud proceeds as cash, while Goeh and Marfo wired thousands of dollars overseas, including to accounts in China, the United Arab Emirates, Italy, Singapore, and Mauritius.

The money laundering conspiracy charge has a maximum term of 20 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$500,000 or twice the value of the funds involved in the transfer, whichever is greater.

U.S. Attorney Sellinger credited special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agents in Charge George M. Crouch Jr. in Newark and Eric B. Smith in Cleveland, Ohio; special agents of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Irene Lindow in Chicago, Illinois, and the U.S. Secret Service, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Paul Duran in San Antonio, Texas, with the investigation leading to the charges. U.S. Attorney Sellinger also thanks the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Ohio for its assistance.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jamie L. Hoxie of the U.S. Attorney's Office's Cybercrime Unit in Newark.

The charges and allegations contained in the complaints are merely accusations and the defendants are considered innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Attachment(s):

[Download Goeh.Complaint.pdf](#)

[Download Marfo.Complaint.pdf](#)

[Download SBraxton.Complaint.pdf](#)

[Download CBraxon.Complaint.pdf](#)

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[USAO - New Jersey](#)

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