



# United States Army Criminal Investigation Command

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## CID Special Agent recognized by Department of Justice for work done on one of country's largest terrorism financing cases

**Fort Belvoir, VA** - What became known as one of the largest terrorism financing prosecutions in American history ended in May 2009. Tried and convicted of funneling more than \$12 million to Hamas, the Holy Land Foundation (HLF) trials eventually sent five of its officers to prison for terms ranging from 15 to 65 years.

Getting to those convictions was no easy task; an army of law enforcement officials from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Department of Justice (DOJ) and other federal agencies including the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID, worked on the case, which went to trial twice. The first trial ended with a deadlocked jury, the second federal jury returned guilty verdicts on all 108 charges that included tax fraud and money laundering.



One of the foot soldiers in this epic battle against HLF was CID Special Agent Eric Wood assigned to the Dallas FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force in Dallas, Texas. And for his work, the Department of Justice recently awarded him the Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service. It is the DOJ's second highest award for employee performance.

"As the only non-FBI Special Agent assigned to the investigative team, I feel honored and humbled to represent the U.S. Army and the U.S. Army CID in receiving the award," said Wood.

Wood joined the Army in 1990 as a military police officer and joined CID in 1996. He left active duty service in 1999 and was later hired as a civilian CID Special Agent with the Arlington, Texas, Major Procurement Fraud Unit (MPFU) office in January 2000. The MPFU conducts investigations regarding allegations of major procurement fraud, corruption, kickbacks, antitrust violations and other incidents involving major acquisitions systems where the U.S. Army has an interest.

Wood worked on the HLF case for five years and said that it was definitely the most challenging case he's ever worked on; the size, foreign connections and political significance were all huge obstacles.

"The investigation accumulated hundreds of thousands of documents," said Wood. "We used several very sensitive sources and techniques to acquire evidence ... the fact that the money eventually ended up in Palestine was very challenging in regards to obtaining bank records, tracing the money and identifying witnesses that were willing to travel to the U.S. to testify while facing persecution if they did so ... the classification level of the evidence and weighing the benefit of releasing that information while making sure we did not jeopardize other on-going or future investigations ..." all of these issues posed formidable roadblocks said Wood.

Wood was responsible for different aspects of the investigation over those five years, but feels the most significant contribution was being solely responsible for the declassification of all classified material being used during the HLF trial and retrial.

“In total, I facilitated the declassification of 21,853 National Security and Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act derived documents,” said Wood. “This represents the largest production of declassified documents in the history of the FBI.”

To accomplish this task, Wood became an expert on classification and declassification procedures; this included submitting written declassification requests to senior members of the FBI and the Original Classification Authority. He also had to apply proper redactions and declassification markings and ensure proper handling of all classified/declassified documents.

“I had to obtain concurrence from FBI field offices to have particular documents declassified,” said Wood. “I also had to establish, update and monitor a tracking system for logging all declassified documents and I had to ensure proper retention and storage of declassified documents. “

Wood was also selected to develop a strategic and tactical action plan for physically reviewing more than 1.5 million seized documents, within a seven month period.

“The purpose and intent of this review was to locate and identify additional evidence to be used during the retrial,” said Wood. “Initially, I had to attend hours of training on the Forensic Tool Kit, which is a software package that allows users to conduct forensic examinations of digital data. In this case, our investigative team needed to examine more than 1.5 million seized documents, e-mails, spreadsheets and photographs.

“In order to effectively organize the data, I created a database, which detailed each category that was required to be reviewed; provided breakdowns of who would conduct the review; highlighted priority categories to be reviewed; provided a timeline for completing different categories; and most importantly, this database enabled me, the review team and senior management to constantly track the progress of the examination on a daily basis,” said Wood.

According to Wood, the forensic examination was a total success that produced new and significant pieces of evidence.

“The review team examined 1,541,226 documents, e-mails, spreadsheets and photographs, out of which 13,417 were identified and separated for a secondary review by senior case agents,” he said. “Of these, 23 were identified as being new and significant evidence to be presented at trial.

Although daunting as the case was, Wood said he just never gave up and summed up his motivation.

“Never giving up, staying focused and remembering the importance of what this case meant to protecting, not only America, but other innocent people from being victims of terrorist activity,” said Wood. “Understanding the importance of this landmark decision and how it would impact future cases, and the responsibility that I have to protect and defend this country from those that want to do it harm.”