



U.S. Citizenship and
Immigration Services

USCIS Assists in Investigation Leading to Conviction of Imposter Attorney in Marriage Fraud Scheme

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LOS ANGELES — U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) assisted in an investigation that led to a federal jury finding Jason Shiao guilty in a marriage fraud scheme. The Santa Fe Springs man, who posed as an attorney as part of an elaborate immigration fraud scheme in which at least 87 foreign nationals – mostly Chinese citizens – paid tens of thousands of dollars to be “married” to United States citizens, was sentenced yesterday to two years in federal prison.

Shiao, also known as “Zheng Yi Xiao,” 67, who operated the Pasadena-based Jason (USA) International Law Corporation, was initially charged in this case in 2015. In January he pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit visa fraud and marriage fraud.

As part of the scheme, Shiao falsely claimed to be an attorney, paid United States citizens thousands of dollars to participate in the scheme, introduced immigrants seeking benefits to American citizens to facilitate the sham marriages, instructed his clients to pose for wedding photographs, and told clients to lie to USCIS officials. According to court documents, Chinese nationals paid up to \$50,000 to enter into sham marriages in the hopes of obtaining lawful permanent resident cards – often referred to as “Green Cards” – that would allow them to legally reside in the United States.

The case also involves Shiao's daughter, Lynn Leung, 45, of Pasadena, also pleaded guilty to a conspiracy charge and sentenced to six months in prison. A third defendant charged in the case – Shannon Mendoza, 50, of Pacoima – was transferred to the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, where he is also being prosecuted for drug trafficking charges based on conduct allegedly committed while on pre-trial release in the immigration fraud case.

While Shiao and Leung served as brokers by arranging the sham marriages and filing immigration applications, Mendoza allegedly acted as a recruiter by finding U.S. citizens who were willing to enter into sham marriages in exchange for payments of up to \$15,000.

Court documents describe how the defendants went to considerable lengths to make the fake marriages appear real. According to Shiao's plea agreement, he and his daughter prepared documentation that was filed with USCIS to bolster the validity of the fraudulent marriages, including staged photographs of “wedding ceremonies” and bogus tax returns, life insurance policies, joint bank account information and apartment lease applications.

“As an agency of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, USCIS has zero tolerance for marriage fraud,” said Los Angeles District Director, Susan M. Curda. “Justice has been served with this conviction, and we remain vigilant in safeguarding our nation and ensuring the integrity of our immigration system.”

Director Curda commended the Los Angeles Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force whose collaboration resulted in the uncovering of this fraud scheme. The task force includes: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services’ Fraud Detection and National Security unit, Homeland Security investigations (HSI) and the U.S. Department of State’s Diplomatic Security Service.

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