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Columbia County drug court coordinator picked up for drugs, theft

Emily Cayton of Scappoose charged with first-degree theft; attorney cautions against jumping to conclusions

BY DARRYL SWAN

The South County Spotlight, Sep 19, 2008, Updated Oct 30, 2009 (20 Reader comments)

Detectives with the Columbia Enforcement Narcotics Team arrested the Columbia County drug court coordinator on Friday after learning she had been leaking police information about people she believed to be drug informants to suspected drug dealers.



Emily Cayton
SUBMITTED IMAGE / THE SOUTH COUNTY SPOTLIGHT

Emily Davis Cayton, 30, of Scappoose was arrested following what police have described as an "intense" investigation. Though she worked as the drug court coordinator for the county, Cayton was an employee of the state circuit court system.

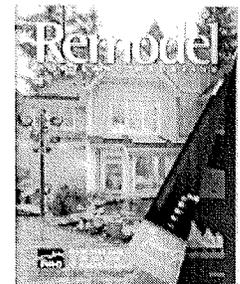
On Sept. 4 police served search warrants on Cayton's residence, vehicle, office and person. Items seized as a result of those searches included methamphetamine and drug records, as well as official documents that raised investigators' suspicions about her, according to a prepared release.

CENT Det. Sgt. Phillip Edwards said an informant tipped off the drug-enforcement agency in mid-July.

Edwards said he does not believe any of his agency's informants had their identities compromised by Cayton's alleged actions. "I believe we were able to intervene in that process before [any were compromised]," he said.

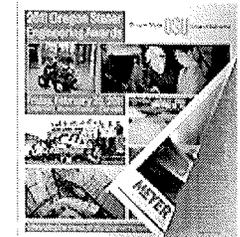
Robert Salisbury, a St. Helens attorney representing Cayton, urged against jumping to early conclusions about the case.

Cayton was arraigned Friday on the first-degree theft charge and released



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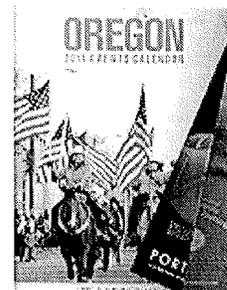


from jail. She is now on paid administrative leave.

Drug court is a program offered to eligible drug offenders where the participant agrees to weekly meetings with probation officers and a judge. As the coordinator, Cayton was responsible for some counseling, including helping the drug court participants set and make appointments, and to navigate treatment options.

“She would kind of be like an extra counselor, someone on their side trying to help them get through the treatment court, and being there for them if they have an issue,” said Sue Hill, the Columbia County Circuit Court administrator.

Hill said news of Cayton’s arrest has sent shockwaves through the court community, including the drug court participants.



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