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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, August 24, 2018

**Scientist Sentenced To Three Years For Defrauding NASA, U.S.
Navy, And Missile Defense Agency**

Tampa, Florida – U.S. District Judge Virginia Hernandez Covington has sentenced Akbar Fard (54, formerly of Tampa) to three years in federal prison for wire fraud. The court also ordered Fard to forfeit \$ 1,472,082, proceeds which are traceable to of the offense.

A federal jury found him guilty on February 9, 2018.

According to testimony and evidence presented at trial, Fard defrauded the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), and the U.S. Navy. He diverted for his personal benefit \$1,472,082 that should have been used to research critical national research priorities related to spacecraft, satellites, and the protection of naval assets from fires. With the money, Fard went on an international vacation, paid for a car, funded his retirement, and purchased retail items and groceries.

This case was investigated by NASA's Office of the Inspector General, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas N. Palermo.

Topic(s):
Financial Fraud**Component(s):**
[USAO - Florida, Middle](#)

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