

A Message from the Editors

As in past issues of the Journal of Economic Crime Management, the Winter 2005 issue demonstrates the wide range of economic crime that continues to be perpetrated in our world today, and the ongoing effort to learn more about crime characteristics to enhance our abilities to detect, prevent, and otherwise control these crimes. Scott Petucci's article on auto insurance fraud approaches that economic crime from a proactive detection perspective. Petucci shows how the Benford's law digital analysis method can be applied to first-party automobile insurance claim data to uncover digital irregularities that may prove to be "red flags" for claim fraud. Petucci underscores the benefits of using this analytical method, along with warnings of some of its limitations.

The Gordon and Willox article proposes solutions to the mounting problem of improper payments in government entitlement programs. The paper focuses on the application of identity authentication systems that have proven effective in stopping fraud in the private sector. The results of three pilot studies conducted for government entitlement agencies provide promise for ferreting out improper payments on a large scale where identity problems and eligibility weaknesses are a cause.

Henry Vandenburg's article extracts valuable information on home health care fraud from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS), and asks if region plays a role in the commission of these offenses. Vandenburg's data analysis serves to support organizational crime causation theories that posit that such crimes are caused by falling profits, lack of regulation and decentralization. Vandenburg's findings that over treatment of home health services was more likely to occur in the rural South and West United States should have a pronounced bearing the importance of effective regulation in these geographic areas.

In an effort to expand the reach and reputation of JECM, we have made some changes to the Editorial Board. We want to thank four members of the Board of Directors of the Economic Crime Institute for their service and help in the inception and launch of the journal: Joel Lisker, John Martin, Norman Willox, and Veronica Wyrwas. We welcome four new individuals to the Editorial Board and thank them for their willingness to join: Michael Benson, Professor of Criminal Justice, University of Cincinnati; William Laufer, Associate Professor of Legal Studies and Sociology, Wharton, University of Pennsylvania; Henry Pontell, Professor, Department of Criminology, Law and Society, School of Social Ecology, University of California, Irvine; and Kip Schlegel, Associate Professor, Department of Criminal Justice, Indiana University.

Our next issue will be out in May/June 2005. We are currently accepting articles for it and invite and encourage you to consider making a submission by May 1st. Suggested topics of interest include, but are not limited to, phishing, corporate

identity fraud, management fraud, the use of information-sharing to prevent fraud, and emerging cyber fraud schemes.

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