

### Identity Fraud Case Draws Jail Time

(KNZA)--A Troy woman convicted on charges in a Brown County identity fraud and phone harassment case has been sentenced to one year in the county jail.

District Judge Jim Patton on Monday sentenced 23-year-old Molly Smith on one count of criminal threat, two counts of identity fraud, and eight misdemeanor counts of harassment by telephone.

Judge Patton ordered Smith to begin serving the jail sentence at 6 Friday evening. After completion of the jail sentence, Smith will be placed on 18-months supervised probation. In ordering the jail time, Patton told Smith she was "playing with people lives", and he wanted to send a message.

Smith pleaded no contest to the charges, which were contained in an amended complaint, in March. County Attorney Kevin Hill said Smith assumed a false identity in order to text various individuals in the Hiawatha area last year, sending harassing and threatening messages. Hill said Smith's actions had a profound impact on many people, and weren't a harmless prank. Several of the victims were present in court for the sentencing.

Before the sentence was handed down, Smith tearfully told the court she truly regrets everything she did and is sorry for her actions. Her attorney said she drafted a letter of apology to be presented to each of the victims.

A September jury trial is set for co-defendant, Amanda Gunderson. Gunderson, of Hiawatha, is accused of aiding and abetting Smith and faces three counts.

Both women were arrested last November following an investigation by the Brown County Sheriff's Department.

Many Signals Communications