

WILL LORI LOUGHLIN GO TO PRISON? ACTOR, HUSBAND TO...

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U.S.

Will Lori Loughlin Go to Prison? Actor, Husband to Plead Guilty in College Admission Scandal

BY **JENNI FINK** ON 5/21/20 AT 9:37 AM EDT



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LORI LOUGHLIN

COLLEGE

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Lori Loughlin and her husband, Massimo Giannulli agreed to plead guilty in the college admission scandal and have accepted that they

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Loughlin and her husband were arrested in March as part of the FBI sting operation "Varsity Blues," where they were accused of paying to falsify athletic records for their daughters, Isabella and Olivia Jade, to facilitate their admission to the University of Southern California. On Thursday, the Department of Justice announced they both agreed to plead guilty—Loughlin to one count of conspiracy to commit wire and mail fraud and Giannulli to one count of conspiracy to commit wire and mail fraud and honest services wire and mail fraud.

As part of their plea, Loughlin agreed to a sentence of two months in prison, a \$150,000 fine and two years of supervised release with 100 hours of community service. Giannulli agreed to five months in prison, a \$250,000 fine and two years of supervised release with 250 hours of community service.

Without the plea, the charges carried sentences of up to 20 years in prison. Both sentences are subject to the court's approval and U.S. District Judge Nathaniel M. Gorton at a date that has yet to be released.

"Under the plea agreements filed today, these defendants will serve prison terms reflecting their respective roles in a conspiracy to corrupt the college admissions process and which are consistent with prior sentences in this case. We will continue to pursue accountability for undermining the integrity of college admissions," United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling said in a statement.

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Actress Lori Loughlin and husband Mossimo Giannulli exit the Boston Federal Court house after a pre-trial hearing with Magistrate Judge Kelley at the John Joseph Moakley US Courthouse in Boston on August 27, 2019. On Thursday, Loughlin and her husband agreed to plead guilty in the college admission scandal.

JOSEPH PREZIOSO/AFP/GETTY

Loughlin and Giannuli were previously charged with additional counts of conspiracy to commit federal programs bribery and conspiracy to commit money laundering and were facing sentences that amounted to over four decades in prison. Those charges will be dismissed following the sentencing hearing and the government agreed to not bring further charges against them.

Both parents were accused of using their wealth to help their daughters gain admission to USC as recruits for the rowing team based on falsified athletic profiles. Even as a growing number of other defendants, including actor Felicity Huffman, pleaded guilty and received lenient sentences, Loughlin and her husband appeared ready to go to trial.

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- Yes
- No
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"She probably believes her innocence," Lara Yeretsian, a criminal defense attorney, told *Newsweek* in November. "It was one thing to think she was working the system, that doesn't necessarily mean they thought they were doing something criminal."

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According to the government's complaint, Giannulli sent photos of their daughters on an ergometer to Rick Singer, the scheme's mastermind, which were then used for their faux athletic profiles. Donna Heinel, the former USC senior women's associate athletic director, then presented the profiles to a subcommittee for athletic admissions for acceptance to the school. Heinel has pleaded not guilty.

Giannulli and Loughlin are accused of paying \$500,000 to help their daughters get into college and both girls have since ceased their studies at

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including the couple, 24 parents have pleaded guilty and their prison sentences have ranged from Huffman's 14 days to nine. One parent, Peter Jan Sartorio, avoided jail time and was instead given one year of probation.

Gorton, the judge tasked with sentencing Giannulli and Loughlin, has only sentenced four parents so far. Elizabeth Henriquez was sentenced to seven months in prison against a government recommendation of 26 months, Michele Janavs received five months instead of the requested 21 months, Douglas Hodge received nine months instead of the requested 24 and Toby MacFarlane was sentenced to six months when the government requested 15.

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