

## Secretary Of State Marshall Honored For Anti-Counterfeiting

By Administrator

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East Lansing, MI – The Center for Anti-Counterfeiting and Product Protection (A-CAPP) located at Michigan State University announced that North Carolina Secretary of State Elaine F. Marshall as the 2019 Brand Protection Hero Award recipient. The award will be presented on Wed., Sept. 25 at the A-CAPP 2019 Brand Protection Strategy Summit. Individuals worldwide can be nominated each year for the award, which recognizes significant contributions to the field of brand protection and to combating product counterfeiting.

“The fight against counterfeiting requires champions and leaders, and Sec. Marshall has exemplified both of these roles,” said Jeff Rojek, Director of the Center for Anti-Counterfeiting and Product Protection. “Her efforts provide a model for other state government officials to follow to improve collaboration, enforcement, and awareness.”

Sec. Marshall founded the N.C. Secretary of State Anti-Counterfeiting Task Force in 2004, which has grown from 10 members to more than 100 today, representing 50 separate law enforcement agencies at the federal, state and local levels. Since the Task Force was established, it has worked more than 5,500 cases and taken more than \$135 million worth of counterfeits off North Carolina’s streets, including the largest single seizure in Task Force history earlier this year of \$24.4 million in fake Cartier bracelets.

“It’s truly an honor to be selected for the Brand Protection Hero Award,” said Sec. Marshall. “Intellectual Property crime poses a huge threat to the American and North Carolina economy. These are not victimless crimes. Counterfeiters selling these fakes are doing damage to a company’s brand, legitimate merchants, to consumers, and ultimately to our communities who rely on legal sales to fund roads, police and fire departments, and other vital community resources. Our success in combating these crimes would not be possible without the dedication and commitment of our law enforcement personnel.”

Over the last decade, Sec. Marshall was able to develop key federal partnerships to expand the agency’s ability to analyze and preserve forensic evidence when conducting IP investigations. In 2018, with the booming growth of internet pharmacies, she partnered with the Center for Safe Internet Pharmacies to launch the “Verify Before You Buy” campaign. Through an interactive tool on the campaign’s website, consumers are able to find out whether the online pharmacy they’re considering ordering from is legitimate. Through the campaign, more than 318,000 ad impressions were generated and 15,733 website sessions were hosted.

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“Secretary Marshall has continuously demonstrated leadership in the area of brand protection and has served as a steadfast champion of the protection of patient safety as it relates to counterfeit medicine,” said Tara Steketee, Director of Product Integrity at Merck & Co., Inc. Global Security Group.

Marjorie Clifton, Executive Director of the Center for Safe Internet Pharmacies added, “In all of my time on anti-counterfeiting efforts, Secretary Marshall has been unequivocally the most supportive public steward I have encountered on these issues. She has been unceasingly focused on her goal to protect industry from counterfeits and consumers from being misled.”

### **The Center for Anti-Counterfeiting and Product Protection at Michigan State University**

The Center for Anti-Counterfeiting and Product Protection (A-CAPP) is an interdisciplinary evidence-based hub, housed in the College of Social Science at MSU, whose activities focus on research, education and outreach designed to assist in protecting brands and products of all industries worldwide. From counterfeit foods and automobile parts to counterfeit pharmaceuticals and luxury goods, the A-CAPP Center works with major multinational corporations globally to help combat this international business, social and legal issue, by providing strategies for combating this problem, as well as collaborative solutions that can have an impact on individuals, societies, and industries all over the globe.