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Philadelphia Home

Contact Us

Territory/Jurisdiction

About Us

- Our People & Capabilities
- What We Investigate
- Our Partnerships
- Philadelphia History

Press Room

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Main FBI Website

Search FBI Website

Department of Justice Press Release

For Immediate Release

April 29, 2009

**United States Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Pennsylvania
Contact: (215) 861-8200**

Charges Filed in Corruption Crackdown by U.S. Attorney and City Inspector General

PHILADELPHIA—United States Attorney Laurie Magid, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, FBI Special Agent-in-Charge Janice Fedarcyk, and Philadelphia Inspector General Amy Kurland today announced the filing of charges in two separate cases stemming from investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Philadelphia Inspector General's Office. The two cases arise out of a crackdown on municipal corruption by the United States Attorney's Office, the Philadelphia Inspector General's Office, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In both cases, the defendants are alleged to have abused the public trust by diverting tens of thousands of dollars of taxpayer money for their own personal profit.

"Municipal corruption, in any amount, and by any public servant, erodes the important trust relationship between citizens and their government," said Magid. "Mayor Nutter has made ethics a priority and has embraced the experience that federal prosecutors bring to this effort."

"The city can literally no longer afford corruption. We need every last tax dollar to be pay for city services," said Mayor Nutter. "I applaud the teamwork of Inspector General Kurland and US Attorney Magid to investigate and prosecute city employees who are stealing taxpayer dollars."

Brenda Wilkins, 62, of Philadelphia, was a real estate specialist with the Philadelphia Housing and Development Corporation, established by the City of Philadelphia to reinvigorate the City's neighborhoods by developing affordable housing. Through her employment, Wilkins had access to information about properties owned by PHDC. According to the indictment, Wilkins used this knowledge to fraudulently arrange, through a third person, for her daughter to obtain a house owned by PHDC for \$1. The indictment further alleges that Wilkins attempted to obstruct justice by advising that third person to make false statements to authorities about the transaction.

Dorena Kearney, 52, of Lindenwold, NJ, is charged with misappropriating approximately \$138,000 in government funds between 2004 and 2007. Kearney was the executive director of Colours, a nonprofit corporation in Philadelphia dedicated to providing services and support to sexual minorities. Colours received substantial funds from the federal government. According to the information, Kearney had used credit cards and lines of credit, belonging to Colours, to pay for personal expenditures such as elective surgery, a vacation cruise, and pet supplies.

"These cases are only the first in a new partnership between my office and the US Attorney's Office," said Inspector General Kurland. "Together, we will aggressively pursue and prosecute criminal wrongdoing by city employees. Any hint of government corruption will be taken very, very seriously."

"Combating the scourge of public corruption at all levels of government remains the FBI's top criminal priority," said Special Agent-in-Charge Janice K. Fedarcyk of the Philadelphia Division of the FBI, "and we recognize and fully support the mayor's commitment to rooting out corruption in the City of Philadelphia. Our partnership with the city Inspector General's office is one of many ways we continue to demonstrate that support."

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANTS

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR YEAR OF BIRTH
Dorena Kearney	Lindenwold, NJ	52

Brenda Wilkins

Philadelphia

62

If convicted, Wilkins faces an estimated advisory guideline sentencing range of 24 to 30 months in prison plus restitution. The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Philadelphia Office of Inspector General. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Anthony Kyriakakis.

If convicted, Kearney faces an estimated advisory guideline sentencing range of 12 to 18 months in prison plus restitution. The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Philadelphia Office of Inspector General. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Richard P. Barrett.

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