



Department of Justice

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Middle District of Florida

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FORMER HEAD START OFFICIAL CONVICTED OF FRAUD

Tampa, Florida - U.S. Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces that a federal jury today found Michael Jimenez guilty of fraud concerning a government program receiving federal funds and honest services mail fraud. As to the program fraud count, Jimenez faces a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment and up to 20 years for the mail fraud count. Two co-defendants were found not guilty. Sentencing is set for October 11, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. before the Honorable Susan C. Bucklew, U.S. District Judge.

Michael Jimenez was indicted on April 12, 2011.

"The insidious, corrosive effects of public corruption simply can never be tolerated," said Christopher Dennis, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General. "Corrupt public officials waste taxpayer dollars, undermine important programs such as Head Start, and erode the public's confidence in their government."

"The Head Start program is an important national initiative which is designed to aid in the positive development of our young children. Signs of fraudulent activity targeting this program must always be addressed, not only to ensure the related benefit to our communities – but to protect the taxpayers' investment as well," said Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent in Charge, Steven Ibison.

This case was investigated by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It is being prosecuted by United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill.