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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 2010
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**LAFAYETTE MAN GETS FEDERAL PRISON TIME FOR
EMBEZZLING FUNDS FROM CHASE BANK CUSTOMERS**

Defendant Made Unauthorized Withdrawals Totaling \$231,000.00

LAFAYETTE, La. - Christopher P. Smith, 30, of Lafayette, La., was sentenced today to 41 months in prison for embezzling \$231,000.00 from Chase bank customers, United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced. Mr. Smith was also sentenced to five years supervised release following confinement and was ordered to pay restitution to Chase Bank in the amount of \$228,350.60. The sentence was imposed by U. S. District Judge Rebecca F. Doherty.

Smith was charged in December 2009, for misapplication of bank funds. The defendant was employed at JP Morgan Chase Bank (Chase Bank) as a personal banker at Chase Bank's Southpark Branch in Lafayette, La., and was responsible for opening and managing customers' accounts. Smith admitted to making unauthorized withdrawals from customer accounts without the customer's knowledge or consent and using the money for his personal use. When customers called Smith to question the withdrawals, the defendant would then make withdrawals from other customers' accounts and pay back some or all of the money taken. Smith made unauthorized withdrawals from September 2007 through August 2009, which totaled \$231,000.00. All customer accounts have been reimbursed by the bank.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Kelly P. Uebinger.

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