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# **News Release**

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## **Second of two men sentenced for embezzling more than \$600,000 from Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe**

Earlier today in federal court in Minneapolis, the second of two men responsible for embezzling more than \$600,000 from the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe ("MLBO") between 2005 and June of 2007 was sentenced. United States District Court Judge David S. Doty sentenced Eric J. Makowski, age 31, of Brainerd, to 30 months in prison on one count of embezzlement from a tribal organization. Makowski was charged on November 24, 2009, and pleaded guilty on December 7, 2009.

In his plea agreement, Makowski admitted that between 2005 and June 13, 2007, he, in his capacity as a construction project manager for the MLBO, coordinated fraudulent and excessive payments to contractors. Then, he arranged kickbacks from a vendor to enrich himself.

In order to further the scheme, Makowski rigged bids and created false documents. He also misused a commercial account funded by the MLBO at Home Depot stores in order to purchase things he was not authorized or entitled to receive. He then used those items to improve the property of others.

On January 4, 2011, Judge Doty sentenced Jason Allen Heinlen, age 33, of Belle Plaine, to five years of probation for aiding and abetting the embezzlement. Heinlen was charged on April 1, 2009, and pleaded guilty on April 17, 2009.

In his plea agreement, Heinlen admitted receiving cash and other property belonging to the MLBO, knowing it had been embezzled. Furthermore, he admitted he intended to use the money and property for his own personal benefit as well as the benefit of another.

This case was the result of an investigation by the U.S. Department of Interior-Office of Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys James E. Lackner and Robert M. Lewis.

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