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# **News Release**

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## **Final defendant sentenced for passing counterfeit currency**

MINNEAPOLIS – Earlier today in federal court, a 37-year-old Red Wing woman was sentenced for purchasing merchandise from Target and other area retailers with counterfeit currency and then returning the items in order to obtain real cash. United States District Court Judge Patrick J. Schiltz sentenced Rochelle Lynn Roen to 15 months in prison on one count of conspiracy to pass counterfeit money. Roen was indicted along with two co-defendants on October 5, 2010, and pleaded guilty on January 12, 2011.

On September 13, 2011, Judge Schiltz sentenced Markeeta Wesley, age 33, formerly of Minneapolis, to 37 months on one count of conspiracy. She pleaded guilty on March 25, 2011. On August 4, 2011, Judge Schiltz sentenced Corey Terrell Barnes, age 36, of St. Paul, to 57 months on one count of conspiracy and one count of producing and publishing counterfeit money. He pleaded guilty on January 24, 2011.

In her plea agreement, Roen admitted that between January 1, 2009, and July 31, 2010, she conspired with others to pass counterfeit currency. She also admittedly used the counterfeit currency to purchase products at retailers only to return the items later for genuine cash. The total loss to retailers because of this conspiracy is estimated at more than \$70,000.

Following today's sentencing, Louis Stephens, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service's Minneapolis Field Office, said, "This case is an example of outstanding results that occur when the joint resources of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies are combined. In this investigation, those resources were further enhanced by cooperation of private sector partners, resulting in the dismantling of a criminal enterprise with a proven track record of defrauding Twin Cities-area businesses."

This case was the result of an investigation by the U.S. Secret Service, the Minneapolis Police Department, the Minnesota Financial Crimes Task Force, the St. Paul Police Department,

the Woodbury Police Department, the Brooklyn Park Police Department, the Richfield Police Department, and investigators from Target Corporation's Asset Protection Unit. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles J. Kovats, Jr.

The Secret Service and the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's Office want to remind people to check for counterfeit currency. To learn how to do so, visit [http://www.secretservice.gov/know\\_your\\_money.shtml](http://www.secretservice.gov/know_your_money.shtml)

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