

Department of Justice

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LOCKPORT WOMAN SENTENCED FOR CREDIT CARD FRAUD

BUFFALO, N.Y. - U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today Nicole R. Culver, 31, of Lockport, N.Y., who was convicted of using an unauthorized access device, was sentenced to 18 months in prison by U.S. District Court Judge Richard J. Arcara. The defendant was also ordered to pay more than \$50,000 in restitution.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Russell T. Ippolito, Jr., who handled the case, stated that between September 22, 2011, and January 6, 2012, Culver conspired with three others to defraud American Express ("AMEX") by obtaining 42 fraudulent AMEX credit cards in the names of 37 true persons who resided outside the state of New York State. Culver and others then used the cards to make unauthorized ATM withdrawals at local area banks and unauthorized purchases at various retail stores in the Lockport area.

Culver and her co-conspirators illegally obtained cash and merchandise totaling approximately \$50,654.53.

Co-defendants Ellen Flack, Joshua Dunkelberger and Krista Dunkelberger were also convicted of knowingly using an unauthorized access device.

The plea is the culmination of an investigation by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Inspector in Charge Kevin Niland.

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