



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

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For Immediate Release

April 15, 2010

**SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY WORKERS SENTENCED FOR  
DEADLY FRAUD SCHEME**

PHILADELPHIA - Sentences were handed down today for three former employees of MultiEthnic Behavioral Health, Inc. ("MEBH"), for their roles in a fraud on the City of Philadelphia and the federal government which contributed to the death of Danieal Kelly, a 14-year old girl. Manuelita Buenaflor, 66, of Philadelphia, Christiana Nimpson, 54, of Philadelphia, and Sotheary Chan, 41, of South Carolina, were sentenced separately today by United States District Court Judge Stewart Dalzell. Buenaflor was sentenced to 36 months in prison for one count of wire fraud, one count of healthcare fraud, and conspiracy. Nimpson was sentenced to 20 months for one count of wire fraud, one count of healthcare fraud, and conspiracy. Chan was sentenced to 15 months for one count of wire fraud and one count of conspiracy. Each of these defendants pleaded guilty to their respective charges in June of 2009 and cooperated with federal law enforcement.

The three were charged, with six others, in a 21-count indictment<sup>1</sup> that alleged that the defendants had failed to provide social services to needy families, falsified documents claiming to have provided those services, and destroyed records. Among the families who did not receive services from MEBH was the family of Danieal Kelly, a 14 year-old girl with cerebral palsy who died of starvation and neglect in her home on August 4, 2006. From July 2000 through December 2006, MEBH had a contract with the City to provide social services to more than 500 families. The contract was for in-home social services for children at risk of neglect, abuse, and delinquency.

Four defendants, including Mickal Kamuvaka and Solomon Manamela, both of whom co-founded MEBH, as well as MEBH employees Mariam Coulibaly and Julius Murray, were convicted on March 3, 2010 by a jury and are awaiting sentencing in June. Defendant and MEBH co-founder Earle McNeill pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud and will be sentenced April 22, 2010. MEBH employee Patricia Burch pleaded guilty to one count of perjury and will be sentenced on April 20, 2010.

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<sup>1</sup>An Indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

In addition to the prison terms handed down today, Judge Dalzell ordered Buenaflor to pay restitution, joint and several with her co-defendants, in the amount of \$1.216 million to the federal Crime Victims Fund, which supports thousands of programs for crime victims. Nimpson and Chan were ordered to pay \$916,000 and \$432,000 in restitution, respectively, also joint and several with their co-defendants and payable to the Crime Victims Fund.

In fashioning his sentence, Judge Dalzell made reference to the need to send a message of deterrence to others in a position of providing services to vulnerable children.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Bea Witzleben and Vineet Gauri.

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