

Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 15, 2012
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JURY CONVICTS GEORGIA MAN OF WIRE FRAUD AND MONEY LAUNDERING

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Tony Leon Smith, 63, of Snellville, GA, was found guilty following a jury trial before U.S. District Judge Charles J. Siragusa of wire fraud and money laundering. The charges carry a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorneys Tiffany H. Lee and John J. Field, who handled the prosecution of the case, the defendant defrauded two investors in two separate high yield investment schemes out of a total of \$5,175,000.00. Smith claimed to be a multi-millionaire and employed an elaborate ruse to convince his victims that he had experience in international investments. The defendant promised his victims high yield returns in a short period of time. Smith convinced one victim to wire \$5,000,000 to an offshore bank account in St. Kitts. Instead of investing the amount as promised, the defendant wire transferred the money back to himself and others into bank accounts in Rochester, N.Y. Neither victim ever received their money back.

The verdict is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Christopher M. Piehota, Special Agent in Charge and the United States Postal Inspection Service under the direction of Robert Bethel, Inspector in Charge of the Boston Division.

Sentencing is scheduled for May 18, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. before Judge Siragusa.

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