



# Department of Investigation

## *Press Release*

**Release #015-2001**

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2001

### **BROOKLYN MARSHAL'S CLERK ARRESTED IN \$3,000 STOLEN CHECK SCAM**

EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the felony arrest of RAKEESHA BAKER, a former Brooklyn City Marshal's office clerk, for stealing 5 blank trust account checks from the marshal's office, endorsing them with his official signature stamp, and giving them to 2 friends, who then fraudulently cashed them--in their own names in varying amounts totaling \$3,197--at a downtown Brooklyn check cashing outlet.

Commissioner Kuriansky said the investigation began in December, when City Marshal Erskine G. Bryce notified DOI that 2 trust account checks, bearing his official stamped signature and totaling \$1,276, had been stolen and cashed the previous month without his authorization.

The investigation disclosed that the 2 stolen checks, one dated November 6, 2000, and another dated November 9, 2000--each in the amount of \$638, bearing Marshal Bryce's stamped signature, and made payable to Fritz Jamison--had been endorsed by Jamison and unlawfully negotiated by him at the R & M Check Cashing Corporation at 25 Willoughby Street in Brooklyn on November 10, 2000.

The investigation further revealed that 3 additional stolen blank trust account checks, each bearing Marshal Bryce's stamped signature and made payable to Latonia Pierce, totaling \$1,921, had been endorsed by Pierce and unlawfully negotiated by her at the same Willoughby Street check cashing outlet on December 13 and December 14, 2000.

Both Pierce and Jamison were arrested earlier in the investigation. Pierce, 27, of 2257 West 11<sup>th</sup> Street in Brooklyn, was arrested in Brooklyn on February 24 by NYPD 84<sup>th</sup> Precinct detectives, with the assistance of DOI investigators. Pierce was charged with Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a Class D felony, and Petit Larceny, a Class A misdemeanor. If convicted, she faces up to 7 years in prison.

Jamison, 35, of 461 Bristol Street in Brooklyn, was arrested on March 26 by NYPD 84<sup>th</sup> Precinct detectives after a voluntary surrender. Jamison was charged with Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Fifth Degree and Petit Larceny, both Class A misdemeanors punishable by up to 1 year in jail.

According to Commissioner Kuriansky, City Marshals are appointed by the Mayor to 5-year terms, are regulated by the Department of Investigation's (DOI) Marshals Bureau, and earn income by performing certain tasks in New York City Civil and New York State Supreme Court cases, such as carrying out evictions,

collecting money judgments, and towing cars.

BAKER, 24, also of 461 Bristol Street in Brooklyn, had been employed by Marshal Bryce at his 161 Livingston Street office in Brooklyn between October and December 2000, when she was terminated. BAKER has been charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a Class D felony; Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, a Class E felony; and Petit Larceny, a Class A misdemeanor. If convicted, she faces up to 7 years in prison.

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his sincere appreciation to Marshal Bryce and members of his staff, to the NYPD 84<sup>th</sup> Precinct Detectives, especially Detective Clifford Hollingsworth, and to the Rackets Division of the Office of Brooklyn District Attorney Charles J. Hynes, for their cooperation and assistance in the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Marshals Bureau, including Chief Auditor Percy Corcoran and Special Investigator Ron Green.

The Office of DA Hynes is prosecuting the case.