



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN  
COMMISSIONER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**NONPROFIT EXECUTIVE SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR SIX-FIGURE THEFT**  
**- Ordered to pay more than \$692,000 in restitution to the City for embezzling funds from Head Start programs -**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation ("DOI"), issued the following statement regarding the 30-month prison sentence of HUGH BLACKBURN, for embezzling hundreds of thousands of dollars from two City-funded Head Start programs, La Peninsula and St. Albans, which formerly employed him as a deputy director. U.S. District Judge Paul A. Crotty sentenced BLACKBURN today in Manhattan federal court, and also ordered BLACKBURN to pay the City more than \$692,000 in restitution.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "A dishonest executive who abused his position to control and steal hundreds of thousands of dollars intended for the City's disadvantaged children is now heading to prison. And he has been ordered to pay back what he stole from the City's taxpayers. Because of the millions of public dollars at stake, DOI formed a unit more than two years ago with experienced financial investigators to focus on and root out just this kind of crime. We know how to follow the money, and we work closely with our colleagues in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York and all of the City's prosecutors to see that the unscrupulous insiders who loot City-funded nonprofits face justice. Today's sentence demonstrates that clever thieves who think shell companies and sham transactions will hide their thefts are fooling themselves. We remain grateful to the honest employees within not-for-profit organizations who come forward when they see something improper. And I thank the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District for its steadfast commitment to working with DOI to expose and deter the fraud and corruption that, if left unchecked, would sap and destroy our City's vitality and integrity."

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked Lev L. Dassin, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and his staff for their hard work on this matter.

*DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.*

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