



December 18, 2018

A.G. Underwood, Comptroller DiNapoli, And DOI Commissioner Garnett Announce Indictment Of Former Non-Profit Director Anna Mendez

Mendez Allegedly Stole Over \$50,000 from Bronx Non-Profit and Falsified Business Records to Conceal the Theft

BRONX - Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood, Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli, and New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner Margaret Garnett today announced the indictment of former Tremont Crotona Day Care Center Program Director Anna Mendez on one count of Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, and ten counts of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree, a class D felony, in Bronx County Supreme Court.

“As we allege, the defendant stole tens of thousands of dollars that was intended to help children – and then used those funds to serve herself and local politicians through illegal straw donations,” said **Attorney General Underwood**. “Non-profit directors have a fundamental responsibility to their organizations and the people they serve. We will hold accountable anyone who tries to exploit New Yorkers.”

“For years, Ms. Mendez allegedly exploited her position to steal money meant to help children and families and used it for her own personal use,” said **State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli**. “Now, thanks to my partnership with Attorney General Underwood and the New York City Department of Investigation, she will face the consequences of her actions. I thank the Attorney General and Department of Investigation for their continued collaboration in combating fraud.”

DOI Commissioner Margaret Garnett said, “This defendant embezzled tens of thousands of dollars from a day care in the Bronx, using the proceeds of her crime for personal use and for straw donations to local politicians, according to the charges. Fraud at nonprofits can hurt some of the most vulnerable in our City, in this case working families in the Bronx who struggle to find childcare. DOI was gratified to perform financial analysis on this investigation and work with the state Attorney General’s Office and the state Comptroller’s Office on this important case.”

Mendez allegedly collected money from the parents of families using the day care services at the 1984 Daly Avenue location of Tremont Crotona, Inc., which were stored in a safe in her office. Mendez is charged with taking at least \$50,000 from the safe over an approximately three-year period for her personal use and to make straw donations to New York politicians. She is also charged with keeping the records of the stolen parent fees separate from the rest of the parent fee money that was collected, and of failing to report the receipt of that money to Tremont Crotona, Inc. so management would not notice her theft.

The charges are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

Since 2011, the Attorney General and State Comptroller have worked together to fight corruption through their Joint Task Force on Public Integrity. They have brought charges against dozens of individuals implicated in public corruption schemes around the state – resulting in the return of over \$11 million in restitution to taxpayers through these convictions.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Attorney General Kevin B. Frankel of the Attorney General’s Public Integrity Bureau, under the supervision of Deputy Bureau Chief Stacy Aronowitz. The Criminal Justice Division is led by Executive Deputy Attorney General Alvin Bragg.

The investigation was led by Investigator Steven Broomer of the Attorney General’s Investigations Bureau, under the supervision of Supervising Investigator Michael Leahy and Deputy Chief Investigator John McManus. Legal Support Analyst Rachel Demma of the Public Integrity Bureau also assisted in the investigation.

The Comptroller’s investigation was led by his Division of Investigations. The investigation was conducted jointly with DOI’s Office of Inspector General for City-funded not-for-profits, specifically First Deputy Inspector General/Chief Forensic Auditor Ivette Morales, with assistance of her staff and DOI’s Digital Forensics Unit, and under the supervision of Inspector General Andrew Sein.