



U.S. Department of Justice

**Richard P. Donoghue**  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of New York

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 10, 2019**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR INDICTED FOR EMBEZZLING HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS FROM QUEENS-BASED NON-PROFIT**

***Defendant Allegedly Used Stolen Funds to Pay for Vacations, Cosmetic Surgery and Luxury Cars***

Earlier today, in federal court in Brooklyn, a nine-count indictment was unsealed charging Semeo Doe, the former Executive Director of the Action Center for Education and Community Development, Inc. (Action Center) in Far Rockaway, Queens, with embezzling, and conspiring to embezzle, hundreds of thousands of dollars from that charity for his personal use. Doe was also charged with aggravated identity theft, wire fraud and wire fraud conspiracy in connection with misrepresentations he made to the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development. Doe was arrested this morning and is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Peggy Kuo.

Richard P. Donoghue, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Margaret Garnett, Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), and William F. Sweeney, Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), announced the charges.

As is alleged in the indictment, between 2010 and May 2019, Doe served as a Director, and as the Executive Director, of Action Center, a not-for-profit organization that provided services to children and young adults, and provided meals to individuals in need. Doe allegedly embezzled hundreds of thousands of dollars of Action Center funds to pay for personal expenses including international vacations, jewelry, luxury cars and cosmetic surgery. As part of the scheme, he also caused Action Center to submit reimbursement requests for costs that were not incurred — including financial compensation for two employees for work allegedly performed after their deaths. Doe concealed his scheme in part by forging the signatures of Action Center employees on checks he had issued in the employees' names, and then endorsed the checks and deposited them into his personal bank account.

“As alleged, Doe stole money that was supposed to feed the hungry and provide children with after-school services, and used it to finance his lavish lifestyle,” stated United States Attorney Donoghue. “Today’s indictment serves notice that those who steal from charities to line their pockets will pay the price in the end.”

“It’s difficult to imagine a justification for embezzling money slated to provide services for children and adults in need, but Doe was able to excuse this behavior—at least in some part—in exchange for luxurious personal items and international travel,” stated FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Sweeney. “Corrupting city-funded nonprofits isn’t just disgraceful, it’s also a federal crime.”

“This defendant allegedly diverted funds meant for youth and adult programming in Queens into his own pockets, using hundreds of thousands of public dollars he funneled through a shell corporation to pay for expenses for himself and his family, according to the charges,” stated DOI Commissioner Garnett. “Fraud involving City nonprofits robs New Yorkers of programming that enriches lives and provides opportunity. DOI is proud to work with the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to investigate these crimes and hold accountable individuals who corrupt City-funded nonprofits for personal gain.”

The charges in the indictment are allegations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. If convicted of the embezzlement charge, the defendant faces a maximum sentence of 10 years’ imprisonment. If convicted of conspiracy to embezzle public funds, the defendant faces a maximum sentence of five years’ imprisonment. If convicted of wire fraud or conspiracy to commit bank fraud, the defendant faces a maximum sentence of 20 years. If convicted of aggravated identity theft, the defendant faces a mandatory sentence of two years’ imprisonment.

The government’s case is being handled by the Office’s Public Integrity Section. Assistant United States Attorney Nicholas J. Moscow is in charge of the prosecution.

**The Defendant:**

SEMEO DOE

Age: 57

Far Rockaway, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 19-CR-218 (JBW)