



Department of Investigation

Press Release

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EX-LITTLE ITALY OFFICIAL JAILED FOR 10 MONTHS ***-- Admitted Embezzling \$70K-\$120K In "Mulberry Street Mall" Funds From NYC --***

EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today that ANNE COMPOCCIA, former president of the Little Italy Chamber of Commerce (LICC), has been sentenced to a 10-month federal prison term for embezzling \$70,000 to \$120,000 in payments from local merchants to the City for charges and fees involving the Mulberry Street Mall in Little Italy.

COMPOCCIA, who pled guilty on November 17, 2000, was sentenced this afternoon in Manhattan federal court by Judge John G. Koeltl to serve 5 months in the custody of the Bureau of Prisons (with a recommendation she be confined in a community center), 5 months' home confinement, and 3 years' supervised release. COMPOCCIA also was directed to make \$84,764 in restitution, payable in monthly installments of 10 percent of her gross income.

COMPOCCIA was charged on November 9, 2000, in a Manhattan Federal Court criminal Information, with a scheme to defraud the Chase Bank, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344.

Commissioner Kuriansky said, "This prison sentence sends an unmistakable message that those who cheat the City of New York will be caught and prosecuted. Corruption in any form undermines the public's confidence in government. This former community leader not only disgraced herself, but betrayed the trust of her association's members, local merchants, and the residents of New York."

According to Commissioner Kuriansky, DOI began an investigation last April of alleged payment irregularities involving the Mulberry Street Mall. COMPOCCIA was responsible for collecting payments from about 50 Mulberry Street restaurants, cafes, and gift shops for the operation, on summer weekends, of a pedestrian mall, and submitting them to the Mayor's Community Assistance Unit's Street Activity Permit Office.

The investigation disclosed that COMPOCCIA had forged endorsements, between April 1996 and October 1999, by writing "NYC Department of Finance" on dozens of checks made payable to the City Department of Finance (DOF) that she received from local merchants for payment of Mulberry Street Mall fees and costs, and had illegally deposited the checks into a Chase bank account under her control in the name of LICC. The investigation further revealed that COMPOCCIA had used some of the funds she collected for personal expenses, including rent and phone bills, as well as for charitable and political contributions.

In May, COMPOCCIA resigned as LICC president. She also resigned as president of the Figli di San

Gennaro, the committee that runs the annual Little Italy Feast of San Gennaro, and announced that she would not seek reelection as Community Board 1 chairperson.

COMPOCCIA, 52, of 80 North Moore Street in Manhattan, had been employed by the City Human Resources Administration (HRA) as a stock workers' supervisor since February 1998, earning a salary of \$48,552 a year. Her City employment was terminated on November 23, 2000.

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his sincere appreciation to Rudy Washington, Deputy Mayor for Business Services and Community Development, and members of his staff, for their assistance in the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by Julia Davis, DOI's Inspector General for Executive Offices & Non-Mayoral Agencies, Detectives James Tampellini, Raymond Berke, and Thomas Barnes, of DOI's Investigative Squad, and Supervising Auditors David Estimada and Maria Fe Pacres, and Investigative Auditor Pearl Tang, of DOI's Investigative Audit Unit.

The Office of Mary Jo White, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, prosecuted the case. Assistant United States Attorney William E. Craco was in charge of the prosecution.