



## Department of Investigation *Press Release*

### **PHOTO COPIER REPAIRMAN & NIECE CHARGED IN CREDIT CARD PERSONAL IDENTITY FRAUD**

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1999, Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau and New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner Edward J. Kuriansky announced today that a photocopy repairman and his niece have been indicted for using personal identity information of a number of City employees in order to fraudulently obtain credit cards. The defendants then charged purchases to these credit cards unbeknownst to the City employees whose identities had been misappropriated.

The defendant, RAMON PAULINO, a photocopy repairman and house painter, and his niece, BETHANIA DELOSSANTOS, are charged in the indictment with Grand Larceny in the Third and Fourth Degrees, Forgery in the Second Degree and Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree.

The investigation disclosed that between February and October 1999, Paulino obtained personal identity information on City employees while he worked as a technician for Leslie Supply Company, Inc., a photocopy firm under contract to service certain City agencies. The information was used to fraudulently obtain credit cards in the names of City officials, including officials from the City's Economic Development Corporation (EDC), LaGuardia Community College, the Mayor's Office, the City Comptroller's Office, the Bronx Borough President's Office, the Conflict of Interest Board and the Financial Information Services Agency. The defendants used the credit cards to purchase approximately \$15,000 in merchandise from such stores as Macy's, Lerner's, Stern's, Filene's Basement, Banana Republic, Lord & Taylor and Victoria's Secret.

The investigation began in August 1999, after a victim employed by the EDC alerted officials that someone had attempted to change her credit card billing address to 17 Arden Street, in Manhattan. The investigation revealed that 17 Arden Street was a Delossantos's address, which was being used as a mail drop for the fraudulently obtained credit cards. Mail in the name of the EDC official was recovered during the execution of a search warrant at Delossantos's address on November 2, 1999.

A Second search warrant was executed on November 2, 1999, at Paulino's apartment located at 36 Arden Street. There, officials recovered a file cabinet containing the names and personal information of hundreds of City employees. They also recovered mail in the names of many of the victims as well as credit cards and identification cards in the names of additional people. The investigators also recovered City seals and passport stamps, and a number of weapons, including five operable guns, daggers with brass knuckles, night sticks, stun guns, crossbows, shotgun shells and bomb-making, material.

The investigation was jointly conducted by Robert Joyce, the Department of Investigation's Acting Inspector General for Department of Citywide Administrative Services, and members of his staff, including Assistant Inspector General Mary Kozlow and Confidential Investigator, Jonathan Weinstein, and NYPD's Special Fraud Squad. Also assisting in the investigation was the United States Postal Inspection Service.

The defendants were arraigned yesterday in Part 70 before Acting New York State Supreme Court Justice

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John Cataldo.

Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, Forgery in the Second Degree and Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree are class D felonies which are punishable by up to seven years in state prison upon conviction. Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree is a class E felony which carries a maximum 4-year state prison term upon conviction.

The case was presented to the grand jury by Assistant District Attorney Lee Llambelis of the Special Prosecutions Bureau, under the supervision of Bureau Chief, Leroy Frazer.

Defendant Information:

Ramon Paulino, 53  
36 Arden Street  
Manhattan

Bethania Delossantos, 39  
17 Arden Street  
Manhattan