



The City of New York
Department of Investigation
ROSE GILL HEARN
COMMISSIONER

80 MAIDEN LANE
NEW YORK, NY 10038
212-825-5900

Release #25-2010
nyc.gov/html/doi

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 2010**

**CONTACT: DIANE STRUZZI
(212) 825-5931**

**DOI ARRESTS BROOKLYN NONPROFIT EMPLOYEE ON CHARGES OF
SUBMITTING FALSE DOCUMENTS IN AN ATTEMPT TO FACILITATE THE THEFT OF CITY FUNDS**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today the arrest of an employee of Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Center, Inc./Hope Gardens ("Hope Gardens"), a Brooklyn nonprofit, on charges that she submitted falsified documents to the City Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator ("CJC") to assist in illegally obtaining \$4,080 purportedly as reimbursement for karate classes. The City Council had allocated \$80,000 to Hope Gardens to fund an Anti-Gang Violence Youth Initiative, but the City stopped the disbursement. The office of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is prosecuting the case.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "A corrupt nonprofit employee who tries to steal City funds slated for the good of the community risks arrest and, sadly, hurts those he or she is entrusted with helping. Today's charges are a stark reminder that a nonprofit employee has a responsibility to file truthful information with the City and will be held accountable when filing false documents with the City. All nonprofit employees should be aware that if they suspect or observe wrongdoing, they should report it to DOI at (212) 825-5959."

TYESS CRESPO, 36, of Brooklyn, was charged with Attempted Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies, and Criminal Facilitation in the Fourth Degree, a class A misdemeanor. Upon conviction, a class E felony is punishable by up to four years in prison and a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to a year's incarceration.

CRESPO was Hope Gardens' Program Aide for the Anti-Gang Violence Youth Initiative and currently holds the title of Community Aide at the nonprofit.

According to the criminal complaint, the City Council allocated \$80,000 to Hope Gardens for the Anti-Gang Violence Youth Initiative, and on February 4, 2008, the CJC received a final report from the then-director of Hope Gardens. The final report included an expense report for fiscal year 2007 that represented that Hope Gardens had expended \$4,080 providing karate classes for 20 young people and that the expense report was supported by documents including sign-in sheets that purportedly recorded their attendance at the classes on approximately 59 different dates. DOI's investigation found that 50 of those sign-in sheets were altered photocopies of genuine sign-in sheets; that CRESPO, reportedly as instructed by the nonprofit's director at the time, photocopied the genuine sign-in sheets, altered them, and attached them to the final report that CRESPO hand-delivered to the CJC; and that CRESPO knew the documents she was filing were intended to mislead the CJC.

The person who was the nonprofit's director at the time of Crespo's charged criminal conduct is now deceased.

DOI Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked CJC Coordinator John Feinblatt and Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes and their staffs for their assistance in this investigation.

This investigation was conducted by DOI's Not-for-Profit Vendor Fraud Unit and DOI's Office of the Inspector General for Public Assistance and Grants Unit.

Assistant District Attorney Gavin Miles of the Kings County District Attorney's Office has been assigned to the prosecution of this case.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI's press releases can also be found at twitter.com/doinews
Get the worms out of the Big Apple. To report someone ripping off the City, call DOI at (212) 825-5959.