



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**STATEMENT OF DOI COMMISSIONER ROSE GILL HEARN ON THE GUILTY PLEA OF
FORMER DIRECTOR AT A BRONX NOT-FOR-PROFIT**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation ("DOI"), issued the following statement regarding today's guilty plea of NEIL BERGER, the former executive director of the not-for-profit Pathways for Youth, Inc., to a federal program fraud charge in U.S. District Court in Manhattan. Berger is one of several individuals, including former state Sen. Efrain Gonzalez, Jr., charged in a scheme to divert public funds from Bronx not-for-profits for Gonzalez's personal gain. The charges against Gonzalez are pending.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Today's guilty plea is a welcome step in the investigation that exposed how public money intended for young people wound up paying a then-State legislator's personal expenses, according to the charges. DOI investigators and our federal colleagues followed the money and revealed how this defendant allowed his nonprofit organization to become a conduit for fraud."

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked Lev L. Dassin, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and Ronald J. Verrochio, Inspector-in-Charge of the New York Office of the United States Postal Inspection Service, and their staffs, for their work on this matter.

A criminal complaint and an indictment are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.

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