



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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**FORMER STATE AND COUNTY EMPLOYEES
INDICTED FOR THEFT FROM FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

TALLAHASSEE -- Gregory R. Miller, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida, Michael J. Folmar, Special Agent In Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation - Jacksonville Division, John P. Higgins, Jr., Inspector General of the United States Department of Education, and Alex Sink, Florida Chief Financial Officer, today announced that a Federal Grand Jury has returned an Indictment charging the former director of the Institute on Urban Policy and Commerce (Institute) at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) and the former director of literacy programs in Franklin County, with mail fraud, theft from Federal programs, and conspiracy to commit those offenses.

In a twenty-one count Indictment, the Federal Grand Jury in Tallahassee charged **Patricia Walker McGill**, age 60, of Tallahassee, Florida, and **Bonnie Segree**, age 68, of Eastpoint, Florida with one count of conspiracy to commit theft from Federal programs and mail fraud, seven counts of theft from Federal programs relating to educational grants, and thirteen counts of mail fraud.

MCGILL is charged in each of the twenty-one counts of the Indictment, and SEGREE is charged in eight counts of the Indictment. The Indictment also seeks the forfeiture of real and personal property fraudulently obtained by the defendants.

The Indictment alleges that:

1. MCGILL and SEGREE stole, embezzled, misapplied, or converted to their own use and to the use of others not entitled thereto, funds provided by the United States Department of Education through the Florida Department of Education for educational literacy grants.
2. MCGILL and SEGREE utilized educational literacy grant monies to pay individuals and entities for goods and services not related to, provided to, or authorized by the educational grants.
3. MCGILL and SEGREE fraudulently took, stole, and converted to their own use grant monies from the 21st Century educational grant in Franklin County claiming these monies as payment for drafting and submitting the grant application, despite being advised that no grant monies could be expended or utilized as payment for individuals for writing the grant

application.

4. MCGILL utilized educational grant monies in Calhoun and Franklin Counties to pay employees of the Institute, State of Florida employees, for overtime, bonuses, and other compensation, said monies having no relationship to any work performed on the educational grants by said Institute employees.

5. MCGILL required certain educational grant recipients to kick back portions of the grant monies to the defendants and disguise the monies paid to the defendants as “consulting” fees for the grants and would require the recipients to falsely report that the grant monies were earned for work related to the grants.

6. MCGILL and SEGREE caused checks totaling more than \$125,000 to be issued to themselves from educational grant monies to which they were not entitled.

7. MCGILL and SEGREE caused the creation and submission of fraudulent invoices to grant recipients to obtain payments for goods and services purportedly related to the educational grants, when in fact the invoices were submitted to disguise and conceal the fact that the goods and services were provided to the defendants or were for purposes unrelated to the educational grants.

8. MCGILL and SEGREE caused checks to be issued from accounts containing educational grant monies and mailed to themselves and other entities and persons via the United States Postal Service.

Defendant MCGILL was arrested on the federal charges by federal and state agents this morning in Tallahassee. Defendant SEGREE was arrested by federal and state agents this morning in Franklin County. Both defendants will be arraigned today in the United States District Court in Tallahassee. A date will be scheduled for trial of both defendants in Panama City before United States District Judge Richard Smoak.

If convicted on the twenty-one counts of the Indictment, MCGILL faces a maximum total term of 350 years’ imprisonment and total fines of \$5,250,000.00. On the eight counts with which she is charged, SEGREE faces a total maximum term of 140 years’ imprisonment, and \$2,000,000.00 in fines.

This Indictment is the result of an investigation that commenced two years ago. United States Attorney Miller commended the efforts of investigators of the agencies involved in this complex investigation. United States Attorney Miller stated that, “The investigation and prosecution of fraud committed upon the taxpayers by those who embezzle from federal educational programs is a priority of the Department of Justice. This office, along with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Inspector General for the Department of Education, and the Florida Department of Financial Services, will vigorously investigate and prosecute those who abuse the public trust by stealing and diverting educational grant monies from the intended recipients.”

Special Agent In Charge Michael J. Folmar of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Jacksonville Division, stated: “Theft of educational funds and violations of the public trust, undermine institutions at the heart of our communities. The FBI continues to prioritize these types of investigations in an effort to eradicate fraud and waste of our limited taxpayer dollars. On behalf of the FBI, I would like to thank the United States Attorney’s Office and our law enforcement investigative partners for the opportunity to assist in safeguarding our vital federal educational resources.”

Department of Education Inspector General John P. Higgins, Jr. stated: “The Office of Inspector General is committed to ensuring that education dollars reach the intended recipients. We will continue to work with our colleagues in the Federal Bureau of Investigation to protect

the integrity of federal education dollars.”

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of federal criminal law, and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.